Zd
481

Bequest of
Rev. Henry Martyn Dexter, D.D.
1890.

Zd
481

Bequest of
Rev. Henry Martyn Dexter, D.D.
1890.

A BRIEF

EXPOSITION

Of the whole Book of

CANTICLES,

OR,

SONG OF *SOLOMON*;

Lively describing the Estate of the Church in all the Ages thereof, both Jewish and Christian, to this day:

And Modestly pointing at the Gloriousnesse of the restored Estate of the Church of the Iewes, and the happy accesse of the Gentiles, in the approaching daies of Reformation, when the Wall of Partition shall bee taken away.

A Work very usefull and seasonable to every Christian; but especially such as endeavour and thirst after the setling of Church and State, according to the Rule and Pattern of the Word of God.

Written by that Learned and Godly Divine *John Cotton*, Batchelor of Divinity; and now Pastor of the Congregation at *Boston*, in *New-England*.

LONDON,
Printed for *Philip Nevil*, at the signe of the Gun in Ivie-Lane, 1642.

THE CANTICLES, OR SONG OF SONGS opened and explained.

The Text. Chap. 1.

THe Song of Songs, which is Solomons.

2 Let him kisse mee with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better then wine.

3 Because of the savour of thy good ointments, thy Name is as ointment powred forth, therefore doe the Virgins love thee.

4 Draw me, we will runne after thee: the King hath brought me into his chambers: we

will bee glad and rejoyce in thee, wee will remember thy love more then wine, the upright love thee.

5 I am blacke, but comely, (O ye daughters of Jeruſalem) as the Tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.

6 Looke not upon me becauſe I am black, becauſe the Sunne hath looked upon mee: my Mothers children were angry with mee, they made me the keeper of the Vineyards, but my owne Vineyard have I not kept.

7 Tell me, (O thou whom my ſoule loveth) where thou feedeſt, where thou makeſt thy flock to reſt at noone: for why ſhould I be as one that turneth aſide by the flocks of thy companions?

8 If thou know not (O thou faireſt among women) goe thy way forth by the footſteps of thy flocke, and feed thy kiddes beſides the ſhepheards tents.

9 I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horſes in Pharaohs chariots.

10 Thy cheeks are comely with rowes of jewels, thy neck with chains of gold.

11 Wee will make thee borders of gold, with ſtuds of ſilver.

12 While the King ſitteth at his table, my ſpikenard ſendeth forth the ſmell thereof.

13 A bundle of myrrhe is my welbeloved unto mee, hee ſhall lie all night betwixt my breaſts.

14 My

14 My beloved is unto mee, as a cluſter of Camphire in the Vineyards of En-gedi.
15 Behold, thou art faire, my love: behold, thou art faire, and haſt doves eyes.
16 Behold, thou art faire, my beloved, yea, pleaſant: alſo our bed is green.
17 The beames of our houſe are Cedar, and our rafters of firre.

THE EXPLANATION.

Cant. 1. verſe 1. *The Song of Songs, which is Solomons.*
Verſe 2. *Let him kiſſe me with the kiſſes of his mouth, for thy love is better then wine.*

IT was the manner of ancient times, at Eſpouſalls and Nuptialls to indite and ſing * (*Epithalamia*) love-ſongs: 2 The title of which Pſalme may ſeeme to bee penned by one of the chiefe ſingers of the Temple, (who now were all of them Prophets;) * *Aſaph, Heman, Jeduthun,* upon occaſion of Solomons marriage with Pharaohs Daughter; for though ſhee was a ſtranger by birth from the common wealth of Iſrael, yet his mar-

* Ruth 4. 11. 12.
2 Pſal. 45.
*1. Chron. 25. 1. to 5.

riage was lawfull with her: And therefore, notwithſtanding this marriage, his love to God is ſtill commended, [b] *Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh King of Egypt, and* [c] *Solomon loved the Lord, &c.* For, indeed herein Solomon was

b 1. King. 3. 1.
c verſe 3.

1 Firſt, a type of Chriſt, admitting the Gentiles into the fellowſhip of his marriage-bed.

2 Secondly, this Pharaohs daughter became a Proſelite to the Jewiſh Religion, [d] *Hearken (oh Daughter) and conſider, and incline thine eare; forget alſo thine owne people, and thy fathers houſe. &c.*

d Pſal 45. 10. — 14.

Now though that marriage ſong was penned upon that occaſion; yet it aſcendeth farre above all earthly reſpects of worldly marriage, and by a divine and heavenly workmanſhip ſets forth a heavenly marriage-ſong betweene Chriſt and his Church: of like Argument was this ſong penned by Solomon himſelfe; not to expreſſe his affections to Pharaohs daughter, or hers to him, or the good parts of either of them: no, nor the like reſpects to any Shunamite amongſt the reſt of his wives, as ſome have vainly conceived; for then how abſurd and mon-

monſtrous were ſome of his compariſons, likening his ſpouſe to *A company of Horſes in Pharaohs Chariot, her Head to Carmel, her Eyes to Fiſh pooles, her Noſe to a Tower, her Teeth to a flocke of Sheep, her whole Selfe to a terrible Army with Banners?* But his ſcope is to deſcribe the eſtate of the Church towards Chriſt, and his reſpect towards her, from his own time to the laſt judgement, as afterward it ſhall appeare.

Now, through this whole marriage-ſong this *Decorum* it keepeth, that though the Calamities of the Church be as well deſcribed throughout this ſong, as the comfortable condition of the ſame in all ages; yet ſuch diſmall paſſages are vailed and ſhadowed under ſome ſweet and amiable reſemblances, leſt the joy of a marriage feaſt ſhould be darkned by unſeaſonable mention of ſo ſad occurences; Neither are all the paſſages of the eſtate of the Church in every age here deſcribed, (for how can that be in ſo ſhort a ſong?) but the chiefe heads of things in every age are ſweetly, and ſhortly, and lively, not onely pointed at, but decyphered. Theſe verſes containe

The title. 1 First, the title of the whole booke, verse 1.

2 Secondly, the description of the estate 1 of the Church in the dayes, First, of Solomon verse 2.—4.

2 Secondly, of Solomon and Rehoboam, verse 5.

3 Thirdly, of Rehoboam, verse 6. — 9.

Title. In the title we have

1 First, the form of the book, It is *A Song.*

2 Secondly, the excellency of it, *A Song of Songs.*

3 Thirdly, the Author of it, *Which is Solomons.*

Col. 3. 6. *The Song of Songs, &c.* In *Colloss.* 3. 16. there is mention made,

1 First, of Psalmes.

2 Secondly, Hymnes.

3 Thirdly, spirituall Songs.

Psalmes. Amongst the Hebrewes there were Psalmes made to be sung with Instruments, as well as with voyce, and contained Arguments of all sorts, for petition, thanksgiving, and instruction.

Songs. Songs were chiefly made for the voice.

Hymnes. Hymnes are properly praises of God; though any of these are somtimes put for all.

First,

Firſt, this doth let us ſee, that it were to be wiſhed, that this booke were turned into verſe or meeter in each language, that wee might ſing the Canticles as the Hebrews did. Uſe 1.

Secondly, this teaches us to ſtrive for ſuch a gracious frame of ſpirit, that we might alwayes bee fitted to ſing to God. Uſe 2.

This Song containes the eſtate of the Church, as well in the worſt as beſt times; yet Solomon can as well ſing in the miſery of the Church; as in her proſperity: And * David hath as well Pſalmes of his deepe waters and calamities, as of his greateſt deliverances: And the holy ghoſt ſaith, c *Rejoyce in the Lord alwayes*: And though ſinging be chiefly fit and requiſite in f mirth, yet wee ſhould be fit alſo for a Pſalme in our affliction. But we commonly in our ill howers are too ſullen to ſing, and in our merry moods our ſpirits vaniſh away in carnall mirth and jolity; but whatſoever the eſtate of the Church be, we ſhould have our ſpirits as ready to ſing as to pray.

* Pſal. 69. 2.

c Phil. 4. 4

f Jam. 5. 13.

Thirdly, is reproved that ancient Uſe 3.

law and cuſtome of the Synagogue, which prohibited young men (under thirtie yeares of age) the reading and uſe of this booke; but what age fitter for ſongs then cheerfull youth? And further, the amorouſneſſe of the dittie will not ſtirre up wantoneſſe in any age, if the words be well underſtood: but rather, by inflaming with heavenly love, will draw out, and burne up all earthly and carnall luſt; and, even as fire in the hand is drawne out by holding it to a ſtronger fire, or as the light and heat of the Sunne extinguiſheth a kitchin fire; ſo doth heavenly love to Chriſt extinguiſh baſe kitchin luſts.

verſe 1. *A Song of Songs*: That is, a moſt excellent Song, the chiefeſt of Songs: as when they would expreſſe the holy place, they ſay, The holy of holieſt, * *The Lord of lords, the King of kings, the Servant of ſervants*, an Hebrew ſuperlative; ſo this is the chiefeſt Song, firſt of all Solomons other Songs, even of his thouſand and five.

* Exodus 26. 33.

1. Kings 4 32.

2 Secondly, of all Songs without exception; for though David was in his time § the ſweet ſinger of Iſrael, yet as Solo-

§ 2. Sam. 23. 1.

mons

mons throne exceeded his in all other magnificence: [h] ſo did his name exceed his alſo; yet this is no diſparagement to the other Songs; ſo neither that ſome of Davids Pſalmes ſhould bee ſtiled * golden Pſalmes: [i] All purified gold; yet ſome gold wrought more exquiſitely then others, and finer engraven then others; even ſome portion of the pure and holy word of God, more exquiſitely penned and poliſhed then other.

h 1. King. 1. 47.

* Pſal. 16. 56, 57, 58, 52.

i Pſal. 12. 6.

The firſt Reaſon why this Song is more excellent then others, is, becauſe this Song ſpeaketh not onely of the chiefeſt matter, to wit, Chriſt and his Church; but alſo more largely then any of Davids Pſalmes, and with more ſtore of more ſweet and precious, exquiſite and amiable Reſemblances, taken from the richeſt Jewels, the ſweeteſt Spices, Gardens, Orchards, Vineyards, Wine-cellars, and the chiefeſt beauties of all the workes of God and Man.

Reaſon.

Secondly, this Song admitteth more varietie of interpretation then any other, and alſo of ſingular uſe: ſome have applied it to expreſſe the mutuall affection

Reaſon. 2.

fection and fellowſhip betweene Chriſt and every Chriſtian ſoule; ſome between Chriſt and the Catholick Church; ſome to particular Churches, from Solomons time to the laſt judgement: And there is an holy and uſefull truth in each one of theſe interpretations; but the laſt doth exceedingly magnifie the wonderfull excellency of this Song, making it a divine abridgement of the Acts and Monuments of the Church. And that this booke was chiefly penned to bee ſuch an hiſtoricall prophecie or propheticall hiſtory, may appeare,

1 Firſt, by the Correſpondency, or ſutableneſſe of the words of this Song, to the events of each age.

2 Secondly, by the Repetition of the ſame deſcription, and other occurrences in divers parts of this Song; which would be a needleſſe tautologie, if it were ſpoken of the ſame perſons in the ſame time; as you may ſee if you compare *Chap.* 4. 2. with 6. 6. and 2. 7. with 3. 5. and 8. 4. 3. 6. with 8. 5.

Reaſon 3. Thirdly, by the diverſities of deſcriptions of ſome perſons, which would

would intimate and imply a contradiction, if they were not ſpoken of ſeverall times and ſeverall perſons.

Chap. 3. 3. 6. with ch. 5. 7, 8, 9. Reaſon 4. Chap. 3. 6. and 6. 10. and 8. 5.

Fourthly, by the ſudden admiration of ſome new perſons and occurrences.

Firſt, wee may here ſee, the eldeſt ſonne of Wiſedome giveth the double portion of excellency to this Song above all others; yea, ſince the Holy Ghoſt giveth it, it is not therefore onely Canonicall Scripture, but an eminent portion of it. It were profane blaſphemie to preferre this Song above other Songs of holy Scripture, if it were not alſo given by divine inſpiration as well as they: to preferre the invention of Man before the wiſedome of God were ſacrilegious madneſſe. And although none of Gods ten proper names in Hebrew be once mentioned in this Song, yet that impeacheth not the authority of this booke more then it doth of Heſter, where no name of God is mentioned at all. Beſides, this booke is full of ſuch names of God as ſute more with the arguments; as, *Welbeloved*, *Brother*, *Shepheard*, *O thou whom my ſoule loveth*, *the chiefeſt of ten thouſand*.

Uſe 1.

Chap. 1. 7, 8, 9. and 5. 10.

Secondly,

Uſe 2. Secondly, this muſt exhort us to a more ſtudious reading and meditating of this booke, as of a moſt excellent portion of holy Writ.

Uſe 3. Thirdly, this ſhewes us, that as this Scripture is Canonicall, ſo the Pen-man of it is a Canonicall Saint in Heaven; for hee muſt needs be ſo, according to that (not of Peters ſucceſſor, as the Papiſts would have it, but) of S. Peter himſelfe: k 2. Pet. 1. 21. k *Holy men of God ſpake as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt:* ſo that hee muſt needs be a Saint by S. Peters confeſſion; and not he onely, but Chriſt himſelfe ſaith, l Luk. 13. 28. l *All the Prophets are in the kingdome of God.* Now, all the Prophets came not neere this Prophet; and there was no Scripture but it was penned by a Propheticall and Apoſtolicall ſpirit; and though Solomon did fall, yet m 2. Sam. 7. 14, 15. m *If he commit Iniquitie, I will chaſten him with the rod of Men, &c.* verſe 15. *But my mercy ſhall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul.* If ſome ſay, By this it was meant that God would not take away his kingdom; to this it is anſwered, he did take it away, but hee would not deale with him as he dealt with Saul: ſo then this telleth us Solomon is a Saint in Heaven.

[*which*

[*Which is Solomons.*] Solomon the penner of it, but a wiſer then Solomon indited it: The Holy Ghoſt maketh choice of his Inſtruments, according to the uſe he had to put them to; to ſet forth the eſtate of his Church by the choyceſt treaſures of nature: Hee uſeth Solomons ſpirit, which [n] was as large as the ſand of the Sea ſhore. And as God led Moſes to the top of mount Piſgah, to behold all the places and ſituations of Iſrael: So he lifted up Solomons ſpirit to the mountaine of Activitie, (that I may ſo ſpeake,) where onely all times to come are preſent, to behold the eſtate of the Church throughout the preſent, and all after ages.

The text verſe 1.

n 1. King. 4. 29, 30. Deut. 34. 1.—4.

This is to teach us, as it was ſaid before, that Solomon is a canonized Saint, elſe hee had not beene a Pen-man of Canonicall Scripture, canonized, not by Peters pretended ſucceſſors, who have ſhamefully erred in this kinde; but by * Peter himſelfe, yea by a greater then Peter or Solomon, even o Chriſt Jeſus: That promiſe [p] reacheth further then to preferre Solomon before Saul in reſerving the kingdome to his poſterity, which he

Uſe 1.

* 2. Pet. 1. 21.
o Luk. 13. 28.
p 2. Sam. 7. 14, 15.

he tooke from Saul; for even from Solomons posteritie the kingdome was cut off in Jechoniah: The promise therefore of mercy to Solomon above Saul reacheth to the bestowing of an heavenly kingdome upon him. Besides, in that place two blessings are promised,

2. Sam. 7. 12, 13, 14.

1 First, Adoption, *I will be his father*, &c.

2 Secondly, Establishment in Gods house and kingdome: so that if the latter promise should not evince his perseverance, yet the former doth.

Use 2. Secondly, this is to stirre us up to the reading and meditation of this booke, the more for the Penmans sake.

The 2. 3. & 4. verses sing and shew forth the estate of the Church in Solomons time. Verse 5. the estate of the Church as well in Solomons time as in Rehoboams: The verses following to the ninth, the estate of the Church in all the time of Rehoboam.

Solomons time four things.

In the Church of Solomons time foure passages are chiefly observable.

1 First, Solomons choyce of heavenly wisedome, by which chiefly wee enjoy sweet and familiar fellowship with God,

God, [q] 1 *King* 3.5. to 10. This is expreſſed, verſe 2. [q Pro. 8. 34. 35.]

Secondly, the ſweet ſavour and fame of Solomons gifts and graces, to the winning of the love and admiration of the ſonnes of men. [2 verſe 3.]

Thirdly, the drawing and gathering of all Iſrael to the Kings chambers, the Courts of Solomons Temple: or his care to bring on his people to the publick worſhip of God, and their reſpect of him in regard thereof. [3 verſe 4.]

Fourthly, the fall and deformity of the Church, by Idolatrous worſhip, and toleration thereof in many; and yet the keeping of the native beautie of the Church in many others. [4 verſe 5.]

[* *Let him kiſſe me with the kiſſes of his mouth, &c.*] It is a prayer of the Church, or (which is all one) ſome chiefe member of it, for a pledge of Chriſts ſweet and familiar acquaintance, and love, and fellowſhip with her: *Kiſſes* are pledges and incentives of love. [r] *Men ſhall kiſſe his lips that anſwereth upright words.* This is the effect of upright Anſwers, men kiſſe his lips; but God kiſſing a mans lips, is the cauſe of mans anſwering upright words; [* verſe 2.] [r Pro. 24. 26.]

words; his breathing into our mouths a right anſwer, maketh us ſpeake accordingly: as, on the contrary, when one anſwers perverſly, unjuſtly, erroneouſly, Satan then hath kiſſed them with his kiſſes, hee hath ſitten as a * lying ſpirit in their mouths.

* 1. Kings 22.23, 24.

[*The kiſſes of his mouth,*] which is more then the *kiſſes of his lips*; the one is a ſilent geſture of love, the other implieth alſo amiable ſpeeches, when Chriſt

1 Firſt, by the voice of his word, or

2 Secondly, by the breath of his ſpirit, doth either

1 Firſt, put wiſedome or grace into our hearts, or

Pſal. 119. 98.—100.

2 Secondly, ſpeake peace or comfort to our ſoules.

[s] *I create the fruit of the lips, peace, peace, &c.* Solomons wiſedome is the grace of God, as wickedneſſe is folly; [t] *The beginning of this wiſedome is the feare of God,* [u] *the end of it is the keeping of Gods Commandements:* This wiſedome whoſo findes, findes Chriſt, * the wiſedome of the Father, in whom God is well pleaſed with us, and in whom hee (as it were) kiſſeth us; This wiſedome doth not onely enable

[s] Iſa. 57. 19.

[t] Pro. 17.

[u] Eccleſ. 12. 13.

* Pro. 8. 22. 35.

* Math. 3. 17.

enable us to walke godlily to our ſalvation, but likewiſe fits us to goe in and out before our families, before our people, and ſo enlarges us to all duties of our callings: And to walke in the wayes of this wiſedome, brings peace to our ſoules, and to thoſe that live under us: y *All her paths are peace.*

y Pro. 3. 17

For thy love is better then wine.] The favour of God in giving wiſedome, and thereby peace to a mans ſelfe and others depending on him, is more worth then wine, (that is) then whatſoever makes the heart of man * glad. This prayer was powred out by Solomon, the chiefeſt member of the Church in this time, when he prayed for wiſedome, †and preferred it before long life, riches, victory over his enemies, &c.

* Pſal. 104 15. & 4. 6, 7. Pro. 3. 13. —15. and 31. 6, 7. Jud. 9. 13. †1 King. 3. 5, 9, 11. 2. Chron. 1. 7, 10, 11 Pro. 16. 10

Or elſe this whole verſe may expreſſe the deſire of the Church to Solomon, that he would expreſſe his love to her by his divine ſentences, * and bookes, and ſongs, which are better then their civill peace, * then the ſitting under their own Vine and Fig-tree.

* Eccleſ. 12. 9.

* 1 King 4. 25.

Becauſe of the ſavour of thy good oyntments.] Good oyntments are the gifts

Verſe 3.

and graces of Gods ſpirit, [a] ***But the anoynting which ye have received of him, &c.*** ſo called, becauſe they heale a broken heart as [b] oyle: the oyle of Gods grace heales the bruiſes of the ſoule.

Secondly, as oyle doth make the face to ſhine, * ſo do they.

Thirdly, † as by the holy oyles all the veſſels of the Tabernacle were conſecrated; ſo by theſe graces all the veſſels of mercy are conſecrated to God.

Fourthly, by the oyntment were anoynted to their offices † Kings, [c] Prieſts, [d] and ſome Prophets; [e] ſo by theſe graces are wee annointed to God our Father in Chriſt, [f] Kings, Prieſts and Prophets. Savour is the manifeſtation of theſe graces, as oyntments are manifeſted by their ſavour.

Thy name is as an oyntment powred forth:] that is, precious, ſweet, and famouſly renowned; ***therefore doe the Virgins love thee.*** The Virgins in this ſong are ſuch as Chriſt hath not yet eſpouſed to himſelfe, * nor ſpoken for in way of marriage; * ſuch as carnall Jewes, or the Gentiles.

Love thee:]

That

a Ioh. 2. 27

b Luk. 10. 34. Iſay 61. 3.

* Pſa. 104. 15. Eccle. 8. 1.

† Ex. 10. 23. —31.

† 1 Sam. 16. 3. & 10. 1.

c Exod. 40. 13, 15.

d 1 Kings 19. 16.

e Act. 1. 8. & 2. 4, 7.

f Rev. 1. 6. Ioh. 12. 3.

Verſe 3.

* Can. 8. 8

* Can. 6. 8

Verſe 3.

That is, First, honourably esteeme thee.

Secondly, affect thy sight and fellowship.

Thirdly, seeke after thee. * This was fulfilled in Solomon: His owne people reverenced him, even all of them; his name was famous in all nations round about him: all the Kings sent to him, and of all people some came to heare his wisedome. * The Queen of Sheba commeth from the uttermost parts of the earth to heare it, and counteth his people happy under it: † Hiram King of Tyre blessed God for his wisedome.

* 1 King. 28. & 4. 31, 34. & 5.7. & 10. 1,7,8,9.

* 1 King. 10.1,2.

† 1 King. 5.7.

Draw me.] It may well be the speech of Solomon to Christ, praying that Christ would draw him to the Father, neere unto him in holy duties, and promising to bring all the people to runne with him after God: Or it may be the speech of the Church to Solomon, desiring him to draw them together, by publicke edicts and proclamations, to the solemne duties of Gods worship, and promising to come freely, to run together willingly in the times of such assemblies; which was done. [a]

Verse 4.

[a] 2 Chro. 2.2,3.

Verſe 4.

[*The King hath brought mee into his chambers:*] That is, into thoſe bride-chambers, where Chriſt familiarly converſeth with them; which were three:

Firſt, the Tabernacle of Gibeon.

Secondly, the Arke at Jeruſalem.

Thirdly, the Temple.

Into theſe * Solomon brought the whole congregation of Iſrael to ſolemne ſacrifices.

* 2. Chro. 1. 2.—6. 1. King. 8. 5.—14. —63.

The words following in this verſe, ſhew a threefold reſpect which the people beare to Solomon:

Firſt, they rejoyced in him.

Secondly, they remember his love better then wine.

Thirdly, the upright love him.

Their rejoycing in him, is recorded[b]: their remembrance of his love more then wine, is there alſo implied; for, departing from the meeting with ſuch glad hearts, they afterward remembred the comfort thereof, as more bleſſed then the peaceable living under their owne Vine and Fig-tree: The love of the upright to him continued all his time, even when his wives, and hollow-hearted ſubjects

b 1. King. 8. 66.

jects flattered him, and enticed him to toleration of Idolatrie.

But consider further, that Solomon, when hee is here set forth as the desire, praise and blessednesse of all his people, hee is then a type of Christ, greater then Solomon; whose heavenly fellowship and instruction the Church desires above wine: whose graces are excellent and procuring him love and renowne, of whom the Church prayeth to be drawn, and who leadeth us to fellowship with God in holy worship; whom therefore the people rejoyce in, and remember his love above wine: the upright love him. *Verse 2.*

This, first, doth shew us the happy estate of a Church or Common-wealth, when men of place labour not for preferments or worldly profits, for honour or long life, but for wise and understanding hearts, that may goe in and out before the people in their callings; when they desire to be kissed with the kisses of Gods mouth, that he would breath into them such graces as bee needfull for their places. *Use 1.*

Secondly, this sheweth what procures *Use. 2*

a Magiſtrate love and reputation; when, being enriched with Gods graces, as ſweet oyntments, hee manifeſteth the ſweet ſavour thereof in all his adminiſtrations. If any man deſires a good name, if any man deſires love and reſpect, this is the way to get it; Fill your hearts with the good gifts and graces of God: let Gods grace ſhew forth it ſelf in your ſpeeches, in your anſwers, in your practices; this oyntment will bee ſtronger to get a good name, then any other noyſom thing to hinder it: The Virgins will love you, for they rejoyce at your faith; [c] *and by faith our elders were well reported of.* By theſe Solomon got a good name all the world over.

c Heb. 11. 2.

Uſe 3. Thirdly, this is to teach a Magiſtrate to draw on the people to holy duties, by all meanes he can, by his proclamations, lawes, and examples.

Uſe 4. Fourthly, to ſhew that the greateſt comfort of ſubjects, and the ſtrongeſt love to knit them in all hearty affections to their Prince, is his forwardneſſe in drawing them on, and leading them an end to the holy duties of Gods worſhip.

Verſe 4. *Draw mee, and I will runne after thee.*]

If

If Solomon once be drawne, all the people will come after rejoycing, when they ſhall ſee the Magiſtrate come.

Fifthly, to ſhew us a ſigne of a true ſpouſe of Chriſt; ſuch a one preferreth fellowſhip with him above all things, delighting in his company, in his ordinances: Thus did *Paul*, [d] *I count all things loſſe and droſſe for Chriſt*: So *David*, [e] *Whom have I in Heaven but thee?* Uſe 5. *Verſe* 2. d Phil. 3. 7, 8. e Pſ. 73. 25

I am blacke, yet comely, &c.] In theſe verſes is deſcribed the eſtate of the Church. f *Text ver.* 5. *to* 9.

Firſt, of Iſrael and Judah, in the laſt dayes of Solomon, and then of Rehoboam. *Verſe* 5.

Secondly, of Judah alone. *Verſe* 6.

Thirdly, of Iſrael alone after the Apoſtacy of the ten tribes. *Ver.* 7, 8

Fourthly, of Judah alone, in reſpect of his civill condition under the ſervice of the King of Egypt. *Verſe* 9.

I am black, &c.] The Church is ſet forth by a double adjunction, the one contrary to the other; *I am black*, yet *comely*; and both theſe by compariſon: *Verſe* 5.

Firſt, *black, as the tents of Kedar.* *Blacke.*

Secondly, *comely*, *as the curtains* or hangings *of Solomon.*

First, *black*, by the fall of Solomon [g].

Secondly, by the folly of Rehoboam [h].

Thirdly,

1. By Profaneneſſe.
2. By Schiſme.
3. By Apoſtacy.
4. By the Rebellion of the ten tribes [i].

Yet comely,] First, by the preſent purity of Gods ordinances in the Temple. [k]

Secondly, the conſtancy of the upright in cleaving to God, to the King, to the houſe of God, and David; the which was done in profeſſion by whole Judah and Benjamin, and the Iſraelites inhabiting in the Cities of Judah, but in truth, by the upright [l].

Yee Daughters of Jeruſalem, &c.] Children of the Church are called Daughters rather then Sons, as being prered as a pure Virgin for Chriſt their husband [m].

As the tents of Kedar, &c.] That is, of the Arabians, who were called Scenith, or Nomede, for that they wandred up and downe, feeding their flocks in tents,

g 1. King. 11. 4. 9.
h 1. King. 12. 14, 15.
i 1. King. 12. 16, 18, 19. *Comely.*
k Pſal. 48. 1, 2. 2 Chron. 13. 10. — 12.
l 1. King. 12. 17, 20, 23.
m 2 Cor. 11. 2.

tents, which they made of Goats haire; a courſe ſtuffe of it ſelfe, and, being weather-beaten, the more homely and black: Hereto the Prophet alludeth when hee calleth the Church of Iſrael [n] Aholah, and Jeruſalem Aholibah, my tent in her: for ſhe was then *as the curtains of Solomon.*

n Ezek. 23. 4.

It was Davids griefe* that he was long converſant in the tents of Kedar: the Church was now like to theſe tents,

* Pſal. 120 5.

Firſt, in their blackneſſe, which reſembled their adverſity.

Secondly, in that ſhee now lived among the enemies of her peace, the ſons of her mother being angry with her.

Thirdly, in that black and ſad defection which layd the foundation of the after Captivity, when the Church wandred to Babel; her tent being removed *as the curtains of Solomon*, or, hangings; having the name from the coupling together. * Joſephus ſaith, that Solomons hals were hung with hangings of Babilonian tapeſtrie in their courſes or ſuits, and the wall of Marble underneath moſt curiouſly wrought with rich Imagerie: It ſeemeth alſo, each hanging inwardly more rich then other. Such was the eſtate

* Hortenſis Flavius. Joſeph. Ant. 8. 2.

eſtate of the Church in time of publicke defection, pure and richly graced in the upright members, whom the better one inwardly knew, the more gracious they appeared.

Verſe 6. *Looke not upon mee, becauſe I am black, &c.*]

Two parts This Verſe hath two parts:

Firſt, an admonition of the Church of Judah to the daughters of Jeruſalem, not to deſpiſe her, nor alienate themſelves from her in regard of her blackneſſe; or, as it is in the Hebrew, *Becauſe I am ſhee that am black.*

Secondly, a rendring a three-fold Reaſon:

Firſt, of her blackneſſe.

Secondly, of their not deſpiſing her for it.

A third Reaſon is

Firſt, from the higheſt cauſe of her affliction, *The Sunne hath looked upon mee.*

Secondly, from the inſtrumentall cauſe, The anger of her mothers children againſt her.

Thirdly, for the meritorious cauſe, which ſhee acknowledgeth was wholly in

in her ſelfe; her not keeping well her own vineyard, aggravated by the divers degrees, though they made her the keeper of the vineyards.

Looke not upon me:] that is *Verſe 6.*

Firſt, with a ſcorching eye, Sun-burning me, making me ſtill more blacke by your diſdaine and ſeparation; as the Sun is ſaid to looke upon, that is, with a ſcorching eye.

Secondly, with a piercing eye, as the Vultures do, whereof Job ſpeaketh, o uſing the ſame word here uſed of the Sunne, which ſpieth out what hee may faſten upon, any corruption or carrion. o Iob 28. 7.

The Sunne:] that is, God p hath looked upon me with a ſcorching eye, in diſpleaſure; for hee was angry with Solomon. q It came not by chance, or civill cauſes in politie, but by divine procurement; and therefore the daughters of Jeruſalem, to make ſuch an uſe of it as not to alienate themſelves the more from God by it: That which commeth from God ſhould draw us neerer to God; Hee did it to ſet us more Kings in the Common-wealth, as Solomon had more Gods in the Church. *Verſe 6.* p Pſ. 84. 11 q 1 King. 11. 9. & 12. 24.

The

Verse 6.

The sonnes of my mother were angry with me,] That is, the ten tribes were offended: [r] yea this anger of the tribes was excessive, when it brake forth into such extremity; and therefore they rather to be reproved, then the Church disdained.

r 1. King. 12. 16.

They made me the keeper of the Vines:] First, God [s].

s 1. Chro. 28. 4.—6. t 2. Sam. 5. 3.

Secondly, all the tribes [t].

Of the Vines,] that is, of all the Churches [u].

u Psal. 80. 8. Isa 5. 1. Matth. 21. 33.

But mine owne Vineyard have I not kept:] that is, not the Churches of Judah and Jerusalem, Idolatry and Superstition creeping in.

No not the Vines of mine own house, my wives * from falling to Idolatry, and seducing my selfe to toleration of it.

* Psal. 128 3.

Verse 7.

Tell me, oh thou, &c.] This verse containeth,

First, a Prayer of the faithfull dispersed throughout the ten tribes, and commanded by Jeroboam to goe no more to worship at Jerusalem, but to goe to Dan and Bethel, desiring to know whither to resort to finde Christ feeding his sheepe [a] *that heare his voyce.*

a Joh. 10. 27, 28.

Secondly,

Secondly, a Reaſon to prevent her turning aſide to ſuperſtitious worſhip, by following ſuch teachers as will not bee ſubordinate to Chriſt, depending upon his direction; but companions with him, uſurping to preſcribe with like authority as himſelfe in his worſhip [b].

[b] 1. King. 12. 28. — 31.

If you know not.] This verſe containeth Chriſt's anſwer: where obſerve *Verſe 8.*

Firſt, a Compellation, ***Oh thou faireſt amongſt women.***

Secondly, a Suppoſition, ***If thou knoweſt not***; as if he ſhould ſay, it is much thou ſhouldeſt not know.

Thirdly, a Direction to follow in this caſe.

Firſt, the footſteps of the true ſheepe of Chriſt, who went up all to Jeruſalem [c].

[c] 2. Chro. 11. 13, 14, 16.

Secondly, the tents of the Shepheards, the lawfull Prieſts, who were there alſo; [d] There they feed the kids and young ones, who elſe might in time grow rammiſh and ranke with ſuperſtitious and bad miniſters.

[d] 2. Chro. 13. 10, 11.

I have compared thee.] Here the civill eſtate of the Church of Judah is deſcribed; for after that the recourſe of the faithfull Prieſts and Levites had ſtrengthned *Verſe 9.*

ned the hand of Rehoboam, * hee fell away, and moſt of Iſrael with him: wherefore God ſent Pharaoh Shiſhak (for all the Kings of Egypt were called Pharaohs) to ſubdue them to his ſervice. So then the Church of Judah is here ſet forth,

* 2 Chro. 11.17. & 12.1, 2.

2 Chr. 12. 2, 8, 9. ver. 8, 9.

Firſt, by her ſervice to Pharaoh, as if, like horſes, they drew in Pharaohs triumphant Chariot [d]. Joſephus ſaith, this Shiſhak was Seſeſteris, of whom Herodotus ſpeakes; yea of him ſaith Diodorus Siculus, that hee cauſed Kings as horſes to draw in his Chariots.

d 2 Chro. 12.8.

Secondly, by her acceptance to God in this ſervice; *I have compared thee to the company of my horſes*; and ſo in the Hebrew, becauſe they had ſubmitted themſelves under Gods juſt hands [e]. If Solomon had ſpoken of any of his Wives or Concubines, it had beene a monſtrous and abſurd compariſon to liken them to Coach-horſes: Alſo becauſe this is a marriage-ſong, hee ſetteth downe expreſly no diſmall thing to interrupt bride-chamber joy, but vaileth the ſervice under this magnificent compariſon darkly.

e 2 Chron. 12, 6. 12.

This

This ſhewes us what it is that makes the Church blacke, wherein the deformity of it ſtands, in the fall and ſins of the people, and of the Princes, in declining to Idolatry in their folly, ſchiſmes, and rents from their mother; profaneneſſe, apoſtacy, and rebellion in the Church and Common-wealth: Theſe doe darken the faireſt Churches. Uſe 1.

If Solomon ſhall ſet up other Gods, God will ſet up forraine Princes in his kingdome: If hee and his people will ſerve other Gods, God will cauſe his Princes to draw in forraine Princes Chariots: If we be at unity with other gods, God will be at enmity with us.

Secondly, this doth ſhew us there may bee a true comely Church in the middeſt of ſuch deformities, yet the true Church of God in the greateſt darkneſſe is alwayes comely: It is not the ſins of Princes and people that can take away the Churches comelineſſe; they may bring blackneſſe upon her, like *to the tents of Kedar*: but draw theſe curtaines aſide, and you ſhall finde that Gods Church is comely, like to the *curtaines of Solomon.* Run we not therefore from the Church becauſe Uſe 2.

becauſe of her blackneſſe, but runne to her, and embrace her in her moſt ſad defections.

Uſe 3. Thirdly, to teach the children of the Church not to ſeparate from the Church for corruption ſake; not to looke onely at her corruptions, but to ſee her comlineſſe alſo; and not adde affliction to the afflicted: Much leſſe are we to think they in Bohemia, and in the Palatinate, are no Churches, for that they are now ſunne-burnt: The ſunne, even God, hath looked upon them; and it is not their mothers children, but the baſtards of the Romane Harlot have beene angry with her. Let us not then look at them with a Vultures eye, as though wee would behold nothing but corruption and carrion; nor, with a ſcorching eye, make them more blacke; but with a childe-like eye, to pity them for their calamity and blackneſſe which is befallen them.

Uſe 4. Fourthly, obſerve that the calamities of the Church ſpring not out of the duſt, but it is God that cauſeth darkneſſe upon the Church; yea, to ſpeake reverently, it is he that lookes at her with a ſcorching eye; he ſearcheth her ſins, and, finding them

them out, doth blaſt her that ſhe is tann'd and ſun-burnt: If then it be Gods hand, let us pity the Church ſo much the more, and ſtrive with God to renew the light of his countenance upon her.

Fifthly, it was a ſinne in them to be angry with the Church, as ſome of the ſeparation are, and doe depart from us; and it is not a little ſinne and fault in us to deſpiſe other Churches in diſtreſſe. What and if ſome caſt off England, ſhall we reject it becauſe ſome of the ſonnes of her mother doe ſo? How much leſſe then when the ſonnes, not of a mother but of a harlot, hates the Churches beyond the ſeas? ſhall wee then reject the Church? God forbid. Uſe 5.

Sixthly, this teacheth us concerning Solomon, that Uſe 6.

Firſt, he repented of his fall, acknowledged his being wanting of keeping his owne Vine; and

Secondly, hee wrote this ſong after his fall and repentance; elſe, if hee had foretold his fall, and repentance before it was done, it might ſeem like the Jeſuites popiſh repentance, who confeſſe to their Prieſts their ſin before they commit it:

But he penned it after his fall, to assure us the more of his salvation, which some make doubt of.

Use 7. Seventhly, this shewes us such soules are the fairest and most beautifull in Christs eyes (as not resting in the commandements of governments touching matter of Religion, but) doe seeke for the true Church and pure worship of God, and follow it, though with neglect of their * suburbs and possessions. Christ calleth those the fairest among women who here enquire after him, and sell * all to follow him: so these that want means of salvation at home are desirous to seeke after them, and where they finde them, there they goe; and part with any thing to enjoy the purity of Gods worship and ordinances; these in Gods account are the worthiest Christians.

* 2 Chro. 13.14.16.
* Mat. 19. 21,27. Luke 18. 22,28. Mar. 10. 21,28.

Use 8. Eighthly, here is shewed two marks of the true Church of God; doe any doubt whether God be God or Baal, and doe halt betweene two opinions, not knowing whether to joyne with Rome or England? Goe then out by the foot-steps of the flocks; where the faithfull hearing Christs voice resort, and will not heare

1 Kin. 18. 21.

Verse 8.

heare any voyce but Chriſts, follow thoſe: now times are ſuch (bleſſed be God) as every one may finde out where the Church is; but in the caſe of blackneſſe and darkneſſe, enquire then

Firſt, for ſuch as will heare no voyce but Chriſts, and follow then the footſteps of the flocke: ſee where they feed, there joyne your ſelves.

Secondly, where you finde faithfull miniſters Prieſts, as *Aarons* ſonnes, and Levites anointed with heavenly graces: Thither carry your kids, there plant your families to bee fed under ſuch ſhepheards.

Laſtly, wee may ſee here when the Church neglects Gods ſervice, God gives her up to the ſervice of forraine Princes, to draw as horſes in *Pharaoh* chariots: And yet being humbled for this, God will have mercy on her, and ſo diſpoſe of it, that her ſervice ſhall not be baſe, for God will make them to draw his yoke, though they draw it in the yoke of forraine Princes, as *Rehoboam* and his people did [f]

Uſe 9. *Verſe* 9.

Thy checks are comely with rowes of jewels,] the eſtate of the Church is here deſcribed,

[f] 2 Chro. 12. 2, 4, 8, 9.

Ver. 10. *to end.*

deſcribed, as it was in the dayes of Abijam, in theſe words, *Thy cheeks are comely with Jewels*, and as it was in the dayes of Aſa, both in the ſame words, and in the words following to the end of the eleventh verſe.

Thy cheeks,] that is the outward face of the Church are comely with rowes of Jewels; that is with keeping their right place, and order, and manner of Gods owne ordinances.

This Abijam proclaimeth himſelfe to all the houſe of Iſrael; g *But as for us* (ſaith he) *the Lord is our God, wee have not forſaken him, the Prieſts which miniſter unto the Lord are the ſonnes of Aaron; and the Levites wait upon that buſineſſe, and they burne unto the Lord every morning and every evening burnt ſacrifices and ſweet incenſe: the Shew bread alſo they ſet in order upon the pure table.*

g 2 Chro. 13.10,11, 12.

It was not ſo with the Houſe of Iſrael, * though *Abijahs* heart was not ſo upright as *Davids*; h yet the outward face of the Church, her cheeks (as it were) were comely with the orderly keeping and obſerving the ordinances of God: yea and comely alſo was the face of the Church

Ver. 8,9. h 1 King. 15.3.

Church, looking up to God in distresse, [i] which moved him to deliver you from *Jeroboam*.

i 2 Chro. 13.12,18.

Thy necke with chaines of Gold.] Chaines of gold are wholsome lawes, binding like chaines, to keep the worship of God and true Religion pure as gold; such Lawes are called chaines: [k] This was done in the dayes of *Asa*, when hee removed the Altars of the strange gods, pulling downe the high places, breaking the Images, and cutting downe the groves; commanded Judah to seeke the Lord God of their fathers, and the people willingly submitted themselves [l] to enter into a covenant or law, that upon paine of death all the people should seeke the Lord onely.

Ver. 10.

k Ps. 149. 8.

l 2 Chro. 14. 2,3,4, 5. & 15. 12.—15.

Wee will make thee.] This sheweth the forwardnesse of the people to joyne with *Asa* in reforming Religion, and adorning the Church, as is recorded [m].

Ver. 11.

m 2 Chro. 15. 10,—16.

Borders of gold:] That is the borders of the kingdome, pure as gold by clensing and putting away all the Idols out of all quarters of Judah, yea and of Benjamin also, and mount Ephraim, the very skirts, and frontiers, and borders of the kingdome [n].

Ver. 11.

n 2 Chro. 15.8.

Ver. 11. [*Studs of ſilver,*] In works of gold, are ſuch eminent knobs as adorne the works with variety of colours, and metall, and workmanſhip: o

o Pro. 15. 11.

Such like eminent works which did adorn *Aſahs* reformation of the Church, even to the very borders were theſe three.

3. Things.

Firſt, his renewing of the Altars of the Lord before the Porch. p

p 2 Chro 15. 8.

Secondly, the depoſing of his mother, from her Regency for her Idolatrie ſake, and defacing her Idoll. q

q 2 Chro. 15. 16.

Thirdly, the conſecrating, and bringing into Gods houſe, his fathers and his owne dedicated Veſſels of gold and ſilver. r

r 2 Chro 15. 18.

Ver. 12. [*While the King ſitteth at his table,*] That is, whiles *Jehoſaphat* ſits at reſt and peace, refreſhing himſelfe at home, [s] God eſtabliſhing his kingdome in his hand, and giving him riches and honours in abundance.

s 2 Chro. 17. 15.

Ver. 12. * Plin. lib. 11. ca. 12. Idem ibid. *My ſpikenard,*] An ointment of all others moſt precious, * of all other ſpices *ſpikenard* is of greateſt eſtimation: This the Apoſtle *John* calleth very coſtly, [t] wherewith our Saviour Chriſt was annointed by *Mary*.

t

By

By *ſpikenard* is here meant the preaching of the word, which is of all ſavours the moſt precious, even the ſavour of life unto life. 2 Cor. 2. 16.

When *Jehoſaphat* was eſtabliſhed in reſt and peace, he ſent forth the Prieſts and Levites, to carrie the ſweet ſavour of the word throughout all the cities of *Judah*. *

* 2 Chro. 17.8,9. *Ver.* 13.

A bundle of Myrrhe,] Myrrhe is an odoriferous tree, that ſweateth out a ſweete gumme called *Stacte*, which is preferred before all others. Plin. lib. 12. ca. 16.

This gumme is alſo called from the tree Myrrhe, his ſmell is ſtrong and fragrant, and fit to preſerve from putrefaction; and it is of much uſe in embalming, and God himſelfe recounteth it amongſt the principall ſpices. ſ

ſ Exod. 30.23. *Ver.* 13.

Betweene my breaſts,] The breaſts are thoſe that give milke; The ſincere milke of the word to the Churches children, to wit, the Prieſts and Levites: Theſe when *Jehoſaphat* ſent forth to give milk to the cities of *Judah*, hee ſent with them a company of Noble men, Religious Princes, who added the more authority to the Prieſts and Levites, and are 1 Pet. 2. 2.

therefore themſelves ſaid to teach in the cities of *Judah* t. Thus theſe Princes were as a bundle of Myrrhe amongſt the Prieſts and the Levites, to decide all controverſies amongſt the people, both in matters concerning God and the King; to preſerve the people, and one another free from corruption in all matters, whether of Religion or civil Juſtice. u Yea, and *Jehoſhaphat* himſelfe repreſenting Chriſt the Churches wellbeloved upon earth, he reſted in the boſome of the Church as a bundle of Myrrhe, ſweet, and ſtrongly preſerving the people from corruption: from *Beerſheba* to mount *Ephraim* hee went about, throughout all the people to bring them backe againe to the purity of Gods worſhip. *

t 2 Chro. 17.7.

u 2 Chro. 19.5. —12.

* 2 Chro. 19.3.4.

Ver. 14. *As a cluſter of Camphire.*] Camphire is a ſhrub for ſmell like unto Spikenard, waſting the obſtruction of the ſpleene, and by the very ſmell of it making men *vegeſtiores*, and *firmiores*, more lively and more ſtrong; yea, and available alſo againſt the biteing of ſerpents: ſuch was Chriſt to his Church, when the children of *Moab*, and *Ammon*, and mount *Seir*

Plin. lib. 21. ca. 18.

2 Chron 20.12.

Seir gathered themſelves together againſt the children of Iſrael in *Engedi*, for by the miniſtry of *Jehaziel*, he made *Jehoſaphat* and his people,

2 Chron. 20.14,15, 16. — 20.

Firſt, more ſtrong in faith, to reſt on God and his word.

verſe 21. 22,23,24.

Secondly, more lively and heartily to praiſe God: yea, and hee ſaved them from their enemies, themſelves not ſtriking a ſtroke; though their enemies the breed of the old Serpent put them before in great feare.

verſe 3. —12.

Behold thou art faire my love, behold thou art faire:] The doubling of the words expreſſeth the ſuperlative degree, by an uſuall Hebraiſme, *faire, faire,* that is, very faire; which ſheweth the eſtate of the Church in *Hezekiahs* time, who returned and ſet the Prieſts and Levites in their courſes, reſtored their burnt ſacrifices and oblations, ſanctified the Prieſts, called all the people to the Paſſeover, prayed for their healing, tooke away all the Images, groves, and high places.

Ver. 15.

2 Chron. 29. & 30. & 31. ver. 1, 2.

[*Thou haſt Doves eyes:*] That is, chaſt and loathing uncleaneſſe, as *Pliny* reports the Doves to be. *Hezekiah* loathed

Ver. 15. Plin. lib. 10. cap. 34.

thed even the monuments of Idolatrie, even the brazen Serpent, (though ſometimes Gods ordinance,) when once the people went a whoring after it: So by this means, abuſes crept into the Church, in the dayes of *Joram, Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz*, are not recorded till they come to be cleanſed, leſt the joy of the marriage ſong ſhould be darkened by the mention of ſo ſad occurrences; whence alſo it is, that the abuſes that crept in after the death of *Hezekiah*, in the dayes of *Manaſſeth* and *Ammon*, are not mentioned till their cleanſing came, recorded in the dayes of *Joſiah*.

2 King. 18. 4.

Ver. 16. *Behold thou art faire my beloved, yea pleaſant, alſo our bed is greene:*] This is the eſtate of the Church in the dayes of good *Joſiah*, who reformed it to the like eſtate of purity and beauty as in the daies of *Hezekiah*, yea, in this hee exceeded him, in taking away the high places which *Salomon* had built for his wives Idols, as alſo ſome other corruptions of *Ahaz*, ver. 12. and beſides, hee made all the people to worſhip the Lord onely, and to ſerve him.*

2 King. 23. 13.

* 2 Chro. 34. 32, 33.

[*Yea pleaſant*,] It being more then faire

faire, ſo young a man to worke ſo great a worke of reformation. 2 Chr.34 1.—7.

Our bed is greene,] The houſe of God was the temple, the bed in the houſe were the ordinances of God, wherein God was wont familiarly to embrace his ſpouſe, and ſhe him.

Theſe in *Joſiahs* time flouriſhed in greaterſt purity, † ſo that there was no Paſſeover like unto his. † 2 Chro. 35.18.

Our bed is greene,] It is an alluſion to the ſpring time, when the worſhip of God began to flouriſh againe, after a winter time of myrie and dirtie pollutions.

The beames of our houſe are Cedar, and our Rafters, or Walls, or Galleries of Firre,] Theſe words ſet out the beauty of the Church, in regard of the repaires of the Temple made by *Joſiah.* *Ver.* 17. 2 Chr.34. 8.—14.

The uſe is to obſerve the ſeverall beauties and ornaments of the Church, which are, Uſe 1.

Firſt, to enjoy each ordinance of God in his ranke and place: It is as if the cheekes, or open face of the Church were decked with rowes of jewels. *Jeroboam* made Prieſts of the baſeſt of the

the people; and such defect or corruption of Gods ordinances, is a blemish conspicuous in the face of the Church.

Use. 2 Secondly, good Kings ought to put upon their people wholesome Lawes, and strait binding to the purity of Religion and the worship of God: It is no impeachment to their Christian liberty as Anabaptists dote, but an ornament to their beautie, making their neckes comely as with chaines of gold: It was the commandement of *Asa* * *Whosoever would not seeke the Lord God of Israel, should be put to death.* † *And* Josiah *tooke away all the abominations out of all the Countries that pertained to the Children of Israel, and made all that were present to serve, even to serve the Lord their God.*

*2 Chro. 15.13.

† 2 Chro. 34.33.

Use 3. Thirdly, people to be ready to binde themselves by solemne covenant and oath to keepe such Lawes, and to assist their Princes in cleansing their uttermost borders and corners of the kingdome from Superstition and Idolatrie; and it is no impeachment of Christian liberty to bow to Christian Lawes: yea, it is the beauty of a Christian Church to weare those chaines, those Lawes, which were

were made for the good of the Church, and it was their profaneſſe and rebellion that ſay, * *Let us breake their bands aſunder, and caſt away their cords from us.* * Pſa. 2. 3.

Fourthly, Princes to ſend forth ſavoury and gracious Miniſters into all quarters of their dominions, that all their people may taſte and feele how ſweet the preaching of the word is: This is the ornament of a Church, when Chriſtian Princes ſo provide, that all places may be furniſhed with preaching Miniſters; this is to open a box of Spikenard that the ſmell thereof may flow forth, but to leave them reliſhed with the dregs of Superſtition, this is a blemiſh. Uſe 4.

Fifthly, to ſee that the nobles and Magiſtrates countenance Prieſts and Levites, and by their authority to give the free paſſage to the word, and to prevent diſturbances which elſe might be offered to Miniſters in their Churches, yea all Magiſtrates to prevent corruptions in matters, whether of Religion or Civill Juſtice, is as if a bundle of Myrrhe ſhould lodge in the breaſts of the Church. Uſe 5. *Ver.* 13.

Sixthly, the Lord Jeſus to refreſh and ſtrengthen the hearts and ſpirits of his people Uſe 6.

people in publicke calamities, and to ſave them from the malignity and venome thereof, he is then as a cluſter of Camphire to the Church in the vineyards of Engedi, as he was to *Jehoſaphat* and his people * when they knew not what to doe. Chriſt is an ornament, and encourageth both Prieſt, Prophet and Prince, to ſing a Pſalm of Thanks-giving: And ſuppoſe enemies ſhould be as a cluſter in the border of the Church, how eaſie a thing is it for God to ſtrengthen, and be as a cluſter of Camphire, to ſtrengthen & encourage them againſt theſe biting Serpents.

* 2 Chto. 20. 12.

Verſe 22.

Uſe 7. Seventhly, not to foſter and tolerate inveterate corruptions, though received from worthy Anceſtors, but to hate all abuſes in Gods worſhip, even the very monuments of Idolatrie, and to take them away, as *Hezekiah* did the brazen Serpent, and to ſet each ordinance of God in his place: the Church then is very faire, ſhe hath Doves eyes.

2 King. 18. 4.

Uſe 8. Eighthly, young Princes to begin betimes to lift up their hearts to redreſſe abuſes in the Church, to imitate the beſt of their predeceſſors; yea, and to go beyond them, as *Joſiah* did, and to reſtore Gods

Gods worſhip to her native beauty and integrity: It is a faire, yea, a pleaſant thing to behold this forwardneſſe in any, much more in young Princes.

Ninthly, to enjoy the worſhip of God, purged from all Superſtition, Idolatrie, and from all devices of men; it is as if a bed were greene, freſh, flouriſhing and fruitfull: In ſuch worſhip Chriſt delights to reveale and communicate himſelfe familiarly with his people, and loveth not to come into a harlots bed, decked with the laces of tapeſtrie of Egypt. Pro. 7. 16.

Uſe 9.

Tenthly, ſuppoſe the Church againe and againe be laid waſt, ſo that in ſtead of Camphire is Maſſe and Idolatrie, it is an eaſie thing with God to ſend a *Joſiah*, to roote out ſuch Superſtitions, that though abuſes crept into the Church for three or foure Princes lives, yet God can cleanſe and reforme her, as he did in *Joſiahs* time: God lookes not at the corruptions of his Church, thereby to loath her, but to heale her, and thereby to glorifie his grace in her recoverie, rather then his holineſſe in the diſcovery of her pollutions.

Uſe 10.

The bed is here mentioned in the ſpring

ſpring of her flouriſhing, when it began to wax greene, not in the winter ſeaſon of her dirtie pollutions; and before, the chaſt eyes of the Dove recorded, abhorring uncleanneſſe, not the eyes full of adultery, bringing ſpirituall pollutions into the Church: when there is any Superſtitious worſhip, there it is overſpread with winter, but when it is purged, then is the bed greene; when Gods ordinances are kept pure, there Chriſt delighteth to be.

2 Pet. 2. 14.

Uſe 4. Eleventhly, it is an ornament of the Church to reſtore her with beames of Cedar, and her walls, or galleries with Firre: Cedar is famous for durableneſſe, enduring even to eternity, ſaith *Pliny*: Firre is acceptable for his ſweetneſſe, and while hee groweth, for his heighth, ſtraightneſſe and perpetuall greenneſſe: *Solomons* houſe or Temple was of old a lively type, partly

Plin. lib. 13. cap. 5. 16, 41.

Firſt, of the humane body of Chriſt, the Temple of the deity.

Ioh. 2. 19, 21. Col. 2. 9.

Secondly, of the myſticall body of Chriſt, his Church or congregation, 1 *Cor.* 3. 16. Chriſts humane body never decayeth, and therefore needeth no repairing,

1 Cor. 3. 16. & 6. 19.

pairing; His myſticall body the Church, if it fall into decay through corruption of doctrine or worſhip, it may be moſt fitly repaired,

Firſt, by laying in the walls of the Church ſuch ſolid and eternall truths of God, as may hold up the walls of the building.

Thus *Luther* reſtored the Church by laying this beame of Cedar, the doctrine of free juſtification by Chriſt. *Luther.*

Secondly, by ſetting up ſuch worſhip and workes for the people to walke in, as are truely ſweet and amiable in Gods ſight, ſpringing from freſh and greene ſincerity, growing up to the heavens; theſe are like galleries of firre, whereas vowes of perfection, and workes of ſupererogation, and all other reliques and ragges of Poperie, are no better then rotten and moth-eaten wood, fit fewell for the fire.

THE CANTICLES, OR SONG OF SONGS opened and explained.

The Text, CHAP. 2.

I *Am the roſe of Sharon, and the lilly of the vallies.*

2 *As the lilly among thornes, is ſo my love among the daughters.*

3 *As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, ſo is my beloved among the ſons, I ſate downe under his ſhadow with great delight and his fruit was ſweet to my taſte.*

4 *He brought me to the banquetting houſe, and his banner over me was love.*

5 *Stay mee with flaggons, comfort me with apples, for I am ſicke of love.*

6 *His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me.*

7 *I charge you, O yee daughters of Jeruſalem, by*

by the Roes, and by the Hinds of the field, that yee ſtirre not up, nor awake my love till he pleaſe.

8 *The voice of my beloved, behold hee commeth leaping upon the mountaines, skipping upon the hils.*

9 *My beloved is like a Roe or a young Hart: behold, hee ſtandeth behind our wall, hee looketh forth at the window, ſhewing himſelfe through the lattice.*

10 *My beloved ſpake, and ſaid unto me, Riſe up my love, my faire one, and come away.*

11 *For loe, the winter is paſt, the raine is over and gone.*

12 *The flowers appeare on the earth, the time of the ſinging of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.*

13 *The figtree putteth forth her greene figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good ſmell. Ariſe my love, my faire one, and come away.*

14 *O my dove! that art in the clefts of the rocke, in the ſecret place of the ſtaires, let mee ſee thy countenance, let me heare thy voice, for ſweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.*

15 *Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that ſpoile the vines, for our vines have tender grapes.*

16 *My beloved is mine, and I am his: hee feedeth among the lillies.*

17 *Until the day breake, and the ſhadowes flee away: turne my beloved, and be thou like a Roe, or a young Hart, upon the mountaines of Bether.*

THE EXPLANATION.

Cant. 2. verse 1. *I am the rose of Sharon, and the lilly of the vallies.*

THE estate of the Church from *Josiahs* repaire of the Temple, (in the last verse of the last chapter) is described here,

First, before the captivity, *verse* 1. 2. under the last dayes of *Iosiah, Iehohahaz, Iehojakim, Iehojachin* and *Zedechiah*.

2 Kin. 23. 30, 34. and 24. 6, 17.

Secondly, in the captivity,

1. At home, the remnant, verse 3.

2. Abroad, in Babylon, verse 4.—7.

Thirdly, in the end, after the captivity, where is described,

1. Her calling out of captivity, to returne and worship in Jerusalem, verse 8.—13.

Secondly, her estate at Jerusalem till the dayes of the Maccabees, verse 14.—17.

I am the rose,] The rose is first, lovely for beauty.

Secondly, sweet for smell, comforting both heart and braine.

Thirdly, wholesome for use and medicinable.

Of

Of Sharon,] Sharon was a fruitfull field lying under Bashan, where the heards were wont to feed, excellent for fatnesse and fruitfulnesse. 1 Chro. 5. 16,17. & 27. 29. Esay 33. 9. & 35. 2.

And the lilly,] The lilly is first fragrant, Secondly faire, yet of the vallies, where the heards use to feed, as in Sharon. Matth. 6. 28,29. 1 Chr. 27. 29.

These words then set forth the Churches complaint of that time, as some Interpreters of chiefe worth have conceived it; though the words may as fitly be uttered by Christ himselfe, to set forth both his owne disposition and the Churches estate.

The first, Hee was then the rose of the field, the lilly of the vallies, to shew, that when the Church despised him, to converse with her in the Temple, and the worship there celebrated: * Hee was now ready to leave his Temple, and to be a Sanctuary to his Church abroad. * Chap. 1. ver. 16,17 Ezek. 9. 3. & 10. 4,9. & 11. 23. 16.

Secondly, Christ is here described according to the estate of the Church of that time, which wanted culture, ordering and dressing, thornes and bryars growing up in the Church, and not weeded

ded out: * The wicked are as thornes and bryars, † and store of them growing up in the Church.

When the Church is as a garden inclosed, [a] then bryars and thorns are weeded out; but neither Magistrate nor Minister did his duty in removing offences in those dayes: [b] so lillies of the field are taken for lillies neglected, which neither take care for themselves, nor others take care for them.

Thirdly, As the rose of the field, or lillies of the vallies, or lilly amongst the thornes, is continually,

First, subject to be prickt and rent with thornes.

Secondly, trodden underfoot by the heards of beasts, so the Church was then subject,

1. To be vexed with the wicked growing up with her.

2. To be trodden under foot by the beasts of the field, the Babilonians, the Egyptians.

[c] *Josiah*, how sweet a Roe! how faire a lilly! yet how untimely trodden down by *Necho*: The other Kings were placed, displaced, imprisoned, and the whole kingdome

* 2 Sam. 23.6.
† Mic. 7.4.
a Cant. 4.12.
b Matth. 6.28, 29.
Verse 2.3.
c 2 Chro. 35.22, 23, 24.
2 Chron. 36.17.

kingdome with them, at the pleasure of the Babylonians and Egyptians: and in the end, the whole Church laid wast by the Babylonians.

Againe, Christ is the rose and lilly, as being,

First, sweet with the savour of his graces.

Secondly, beautifull.

Thirdly, medicinable.

When the Church is corrupt in it selfe, it is yet faire and sweet in Christ; [d] In him our life is hid in our worst taking: He being white as a lilly by the purity of his righteousnesse, we likewise are white as lillies in him cloathed with his righteousnesse. d Col 3.3.

As the Apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sonnes; I sate mee downe under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.] Verse 3.

A tree first, not tall as the Cedar of Lebanon, not strong as the Oakes of Bashan; but a tree of middle stature, implying an inferiour Magistrate, not so high and mighty as the Monarchs of the world, yet such whose shadow yeelds,

First, refreshing to a man wandring

and fainting in a wilde forreſt.

Secondly, whoſe fruit is ſweet and comfortable, ſuch was Chriſt to his Church, diſpenſing himſelfe in *Gedaliah*, whom * *Nebuchadnezzar* made governour over the remnant of the people that were left in the land.

*2 Kin. 25. 22.

Firſt, under him, as under a ſhadow, they were feareleſſe and ſafe e: But after he was cut down, they were driven from under his ſhadow, and durſt ſtay no longer in their own countrey, which was left as a wilde forreſt f.

e 2 Kin. 25 23.—25.

f verſe 26.

Secondly, they gathered,

Firſt, much ſweet ſummer fruit *.

* Ier. 40, 10.—12.

Secondly, much good Inſtruction and direction from *Ieremiah* and *Baruch* g, who both lived with him.

g Ier. 40. 6 & 43. 6.

Wine cellar,] *Heb.* Houſe of wine; not ſo fitly termed banquetting houſe, which *Solomon* expreſſeth by another name *. A wine Cellar is a low vault, under the ground, darke, cold, raw and gloomy; yet repleniſhed with veſſels of liquor, which refreſheth and inlargeth the heart, and openeth the mouth.

Verſe 4.

* Eccleſ. 7. 2.

This houſe, to the Church, was Babylon, whither God brought his people into

into captivity, which at first view seemed dolefull and heavy, but afterward yeelded to them many sweet tastes, yea deep draughts of Gods favour: Gods Spirit coming upon men, makes them seeme as full of new wine*. It refresheth and enlargeth the heart, and openeth the mouth,

* Acts 2. 13.

First, to the praise of God.

Secondly, to the edification of his Church; such a spirit God poured upon *Daniel*, *Ezekiel*, *Shadrach* and his fellowes* in the captivity.

* Dan. 1. 19, 20.

And his Banner over mee was love.] Banner.

First, for an ensigne of defence to the Church.

Secondly, for a flagge of defiance to their enemies: how lovingly and gloriously (as with a banner of love displaied) did God defend the three children and *Daniel* himselfe*.

Dan. 3. 25
* Dan. 6. 22.

How did God offer defiance to Idolatry in the three children*.

† Dan. 5. 16. — 18. & 6. 10.

Stay me with flaggons and comfort mee with apples, for I am sicke of love.] I, the Church is here faint and sicke, and ready to swoone, for desire of further fellowship

Verse 5.

ship with Christ, and for her own helpe desireth,

First, Flaggons of wine to stay her.

Secondly, Apples to comfort her; as indeed apples doe comfort the heart and stomacke, prevents swooning, and restraines poyson *: Thus *Daniel*, through abundance of Revelations was faint and sicke, and desirous of more cleere knowledge of his visions, and of the Churches deliverance, and found the † Angell ready to refresh and strengthen him: And the other members of the Church feeling such sweet taste of Christs presence amongst them in the captivity, were (doubtlesse) earnestly desirous of more full enjoying him perfectly,

* *Fernelius* a Physician.

† Dan. 8. 27. and 10.—12. verse 15. —19.

First, by the Ministery of the Prophets, as by flaggons of wine.

Secondly, by the Magistracy of *Daniel* and his fellowes, whom the King set up for inferiour Magistrates, as by apples, the fruit of the Apple trees.

Dan. 2. 48, 49.

Verse 6. *His left hand is under my head, his right hand doth embrace me.*]

The words may be either a narration how it is, or a prayer that it may be; so in the originall, the blessings of Gods left

left hand are riches and glory, * and of his right hand length of daies, or immortality: Riches and Honors God conveyeth to us by the hand of the Magiſtrate, immortality by the hand of Miniſters. * Prov. 3. 16.

The Church therefore deſireth God in her captivity, (which thing alſo God granted) that,

Firſt Princes ſhould be the lifters up of her head, her nurſing fathers & mothers.

Secondly, Prophets and Prieſts might deliver to her the ſweet teſtimonies of Chriſts embracing love, this was done* by evill *Merodach* to *Iehojakin*, and by the Miniſtery of *Daniel* and *Ezekiel*. * 2 King. 25. 27. —30. Dan. 2. 48, 49.

The Princes allowed them great liberty, † the Prophets diſpenſed heavenly and comfortable doctrine. † Ier. 29. 5, 6.

I charge you, O yee daughters of Ieruſalem, by the Roes, and by the Hinds of the field, that ye ſtirre not up, nor awake my love till he pleaſe.] *Heb.* I adjure you, that is, I cauſe you to ſweare by the Roes, and by the Hinds of the field, not by them as the perſons thou art to ſweare by, but by thoſe for whoſe ſake, and by whoſe meanes they are to take themſelves bound as by a ſolemne oath (not to ſtirre up *Verſe* 7.

up or awake my love) that is, not to provoke Chriſt to exerciſe his Church by any change of their eſtate, till it ſhall pleaſe himſelfe.

Theſe Roes and Hinds are wilde and fearefull creatures, eaſily and and ſwiftly running away, yet otherwiſe willing to feed with the ſheepe, ſuch were then the Gentiles willing to converſe with the Jewes, and to come towards Religion: yet if the eſtate of the Church ſhould have proved more troubleſome by any indiſcreet or offenſive carriage of the Jewes, they would ſoone have ſtarted backe from fellowſhip with them; for their ſakes therefore the Church chargeth her daughters, as by an oath, not to diſturb the peace of Babel, not to ſeeke prepoſterouſly deliverance from thence, before the time that Chriſt had appointed, leſt it turned to the diſturbance of her peace; and to the * carrying away ſuch Gentiles as were comming on to be Proſelites.

Ier. 29. 4.—9.

Uſe 1. This may firſt let us ſee that notwithſtanding the reformation of Religion, Chriſt may be pleaſed rather to live abroad in the fields, then at home, where the

the people would willingly aſſemble: The houſe of God was now repaired, and the bed greene *: and the Church invites Chriſt to come in unto her, in it, yet hee diſpoſeth himſelfe ſo, as more willing to call her abroad. So wee may ſee, that notwithſtanding the purity and ſimplicity of Chriſts worſhip, yet Chriſt is not bound to any place; if things were never ſo reformed, yet he might leave us, and goe into the wilde field. Rome hath long doted on *Peters* Chaire, and Jeruſalem might as well have bragged of her priviledges as any other place, but Chriſt leaves them: Never reſt we then in any outward eſtate, for Chriſt may leave us. The Palatinate hath beene as reformed as any Church for doctrine, and though they might ſay, their bed was greene, and their beames were of Cedar, and their rafters of Firre, yet God hath left them: for doe we thinke that if God had beene there, theſe things had befallen them that now are.

*Cant. 1. 16,17.

Secondly, this lets us ſee, that though Magiſtrates and Miniſters ſhould both neglect their duties in ordering and dreſſing the Church, ſo that the wicked were tolerated

Uſe 2.

tolerated to grow up with them; yet God keepes the ſpirits of his children ſweet and pure, as roſes and lillies in the midſt of bryars and thornes: be not deceived then, for there may be Roſes and lillies growing, where is nothing but bryars and thornes to ſcratch them: It is not ſtraight no Church, when it is there; for Chriſt can ſee his Church, though ſhe be there.

Uſe 3. Thirdly, we may here obſerve againſt the Separatiſt, that it is not ſtraight no Church, that is commingled (as they ſpeake) with notorious wicked ones: the Church may be Chriſts love, yea and a fragrant and pure flower in his ſight and noſtrils, and yet live amongſt bryars and thornes.

Uſe 4. Fourthly, obſerve the ſtate of the Church, is ſometimes expoſed to opportunitie of treading under-foot, no wall nor hedge to fence them: It may lye open,

Firſt, to ſcratching and rending of thornes.

Secondly, to treading under-foot of * Pſal. 80. 12, 13. the wilde beaſts *.

Uſe 5. Fifthly, this ſerves to direct inferiour Magiſtrates,

Magiſtrates, how to carry themſelves towards the Church, to be as Apple-trees in a wood, wherein the Church travailing may finde,

Firſt, ſhadow of protection.

Secondly, ſweet fruit of loving mercy.

Sixthly, we may here ſee the wonderfull power of God, and goodneſſe to his Church, in turning their houſe of bondage into a houſe of wine, in ſpreading alſo his banner of love over them in their greateſt diſtreſſes and dangers: what more dolefull times of his Church then captivity, when men would thinke God carries his Church into a dungeon, then he carries her into a wine Cellar: This may be a ground of ſolid comfort to us in our worſt takings, for though wee be in the greateſt extremity, yea, in the deepeſt dungeon of darkneſſe, God can ſuſtaine and uphold us here, and refreſh us with many comforts. *Uſe 6.*

Seventhly, this ought to ſtirre us up to more ardent and longing affections after Chriſt, ſo that as wee be ready to faint and ſwoone through earneſt affections, after more full and familiar fellowſhip *Uſe 7.*

lowſhip with him: It was *Daniels* caſe, he was ſicke of love, ſo let it be with us for want of Gods preſence; and pray that God would refreſh us with his preſence, and ſend good Miniſters and good Magiſtrates to be as nurſing fathers to his Church.

Eſay 49. 23.

Uſe 8. Eighthly, this ſerves to teach, and ſtraightly to charge the children of God, when they enjoy Gods preſence and favour in the Miniſterie and Magiſtracie, ſuſtaining and comforting them, to take heed of diſturbing their peace,

1. By any indiſcreet, or
2. Offenſive carriage, for it is

Firſt, a diſturbance to Chriſt himſelfe, he is ſtirred up and awaked, (as it were) before he pleaſe.

Secondly, the Roes and Hinds of the field, young commers on in Religion, are ſoone ſcared away by dangers and troubles ariſing againſt the Church; therefore we ſhould be carefull and take heed wee provoke not any dog to barke, for then they will be gone: Let us therefore walke wiſely, and inoffenſively, that none be diſcouraged, that Chriſt; who doth ſuſtaine us, and refreſh us,

may

may dwell with us for ever.

The voyce of my beloved, behold hee commeth leaping upon the mountaines, and skipping upon the hills.] *Verſe 8. to end.*

In theſe words are deſcribed,

Firſt, the Churches deliverance out of captivity: where is laid downe,

Firſt, the preparation to the deliverance in the cauſes of it; which were

Firſt, the voice of the beloved.

Secondly, the comming of the beloved, and that ſwiftly,

Firſt leaping and skipping.

Secondly, as a young Hart or Roe*. *Ver.8,9.

Thirdly, his beſieging Babel and overcomming it ſet forth in three actions:

Firſt, ſtanding behind the wall.

Secondly, looking out at the windowes.

Thirdly, ſhewing himſelfe through the lattice*. *Ver.8,9.

Secondly, the calling out of captivity:

Firſt, to goe out of Babylon into their owne Countrey; whereunto there are motives *Verſe 10, —13.*

Firſt, from removall of impediments, verſe 11.

Secondly, from ſtore of opportunities, ver.12,13.

Thirdly, to worship God in publicke
* Ver. 14. meetings in their own Countrey *.

Secondly, the state of the Church returned into her owne Countrey, in regard,

* Ver. 15. First, of oppositon of enemies *, subtill and ravenous: where is set forth,

First, their nature; they are foxes, little foxes.

Secondly, the harme they doe; they spoile the vines.

Thirdly, there take us the foxes.

Secondly, of their communion with Christs outward enemies, and inward abuses restrained, partly, more plentifull and intire.

First, *My beloved is mine, and I am his.*

* Ver. 16. Secondly, * *Feedeth amongst the Lillies.*

Secondly, interrupted, and yet by turnes Christ often and speedily, visiting and succouring them, and that to the time of the comming of Christ, and the abolishing of the shadowes of the ceremoniall Law *.

* Ver. 17.

Verse 8. *The voyce of my beloved.*] This was the report of *Cyrus* comming to besiege Babel,

Babel, and his muſtering together of many Nations to that ſervice, which rumour was diſcerned, by the faithfull, to be the accompliſhment of the prophecies given them before, of deliverance by *Cyrus**. And therefore the Church hearing this rumour, ſuddenly acknowledgeth in it the promiſe and voyce of Chriſt †: and ſo it was no leſſe gratefull to them, then dolefull and dreadfull to the Babylonians.

Eſay 44. 28. & 45. 1.

† Ier. 50. 42, 43, —46.

He commeth leaping upon the mountaines.

My beloved is like a Roe, or a young Hart; behold he ſtandeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the window, ſhewing himſelfe through the lattice.]

Verſe 9.

Theſe words expreſſe the great expedition and ſpeed which *Cyrus* made in his journey againſt Babel, all the Nations lying in the way,

Firſt, either of themſelves ſetting open their gates to him, as weary of the Babylonian yoke.

Secondly, or ſpeedily ſurpriſed and ſubdued.

Hee ſtandeth behinde the wall,] Laying ſiege to the wals of Babylon.

He looketh forth at the windowes:] That

is, hee giveth ſome glimps of hope, of further enlargement to the Church.

He ſheweth himſelfe through the lattice.] As in the originall, any place burned through in the ſiege of Babel, *Cyrus* diverting the courſe of Euphrates another way, which before came through the midſt of the City, burning up the reeds, and drying up the water paſſages, hee ſhewed himſelfe through the place, and entered the City *.

* Ier. 30. 31, 32.

Ver. 10. *My beloved ſpake and ſaid to me, Riſe up my love, my faire one, and come away:*] That is, *Cyrus* made open proclamation for my departure out of Babel, and returne into into mine owne countrey †. Though *Cyrus* was an heathen, and knew not Chriſt the beloved, * yet the Church in *Cyrus* ſaw the hand and voyce of Chriſt, uſing *Cyrus* as an inſtrument for deliverance; whence *Ezra* ſaith, * the Lord ſtirred up the ſpirit of *Cyrus*.

† Ezra 2. 1.—4.

* Eſay 45. 4, 5.

* Ezr. 1. 7.

Ver. 11. *For loe the winter is paſt, the raine is over and gone.*]

That is, firſt, partly it was now ſpring time of the yeare, the winter and raine were now over, which elſe might have hindered travaile.

Secondly,

Secondly, the metaphoricall winter of Babels captivity, and all the ſtormes of it were blowne over; whence it is, the Caldean word is here uſed to ſignifie this winter, not the common Hebrew word.

The flowers appeare on the earth, the time of the ſinging of birdes is come, and the voyce of the turtle is heard in our land:] Ver. 12.

Which, with the words following, is,

Firſt, partly a deſcription of the ſpring time, which invited them to this journey.

Secondly, partly a ſetting before them of ſuch conveniences, which, like to the ſpring time, might invite them to this journey.

The flowers appeare on the earth:] That is, even they of the people of the Countries amongſt whom they ſojourned; they both,

Firſt, praiſed God for their deliverance *.

Secondly, furniſhed them with gold and ſilver, and other uſefull things for their journey †.

* Pſ. 126. 1.—3.

† Ezr. 1. 4. 6.—8.

The time of the ſinging of birds is come:] To wit, that the Prieſts and Levites

ſhould now ſing and praiſe God in their owne Countries; which they thought unſeaſonable to do in a ſtrange land †.

† Pſa. 137. 3, 4.

The voyce of the turtle is heard in our land.] That is, of Chriſt the faithfull ſpouſe of his Church, who is mourning in Judea, becauſe he findeth not his Mate (the Church) there.

Ver. 13.

The fig-tree putteth forth her greene figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good ſmell,] That is, the chiefe of the Fathers and Elders of the people, they ſhew themſelves forward to countenance the journey, and to prepare for it.

Ariſe my love, my faire one, and come away.] Being twice repeated *, it argueth the people were ſlacke to leave their ſtates, which they had planted themſelves in at Babel; and therefore ſtood in need of calling on againe and againe.

* Ver. 10, 13.

Ver. 14.

O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rocke, in the ſecret place of the ſtayers, let me ſee thy countenance, let me heare thy voyce, for ſweet is thy voice, and thy countenance comely.

O my dove.] That is, my chaſte, innocent and faire ſpouſe.

That art in the clefts of the rocke, in the ſecret place of the ſtayers,] That now doſt worſhip me in holes and corners.

Let me ſee thy countenance, let me heare thy voyce:] Let mee ſee thee aſſembled into the face of a Church, in my Sanctuary, let me there heare thee calling upon mee, ſinging praiſe to mee, ſpeaking my word.

For ſweet is thy voyce, and thy countenance comely.]

Firſt, the voyce of the Church, at one and the ſame time,

Firſt, rejoycing in Gods wonderfull mercy.

Secondly, weeping and bewailing, partly,

Firſt, their owne unworthineſſe.

Secondly, the decayes of the Church, in regard of former times [a].

Take us the foxes, the little foxes that ſpoile the vines, for our vines have tender grapes.] That is, reſtraine (the foxes, the little foxes) the enemies of the Church, of greater or leſſer power; [b] ſuch as were the Samaritans. Theſe ſpoiled the

a Pſa. 14. 6. 1, —3. with Ier. 50. 4, 5. & Ezra 3. 11. —13. *Ver.* 15.

b Ezra 4. 2. —4. & 5. 3. Neh. 4. 1. —3. Heſt. 3. 8, 9.

vines, [c] hindered the proceeding of the building of the Temple, and the peace of the Church. And therefore *Tobiah* ſaid truely of himſelfe and his fellowes, that they, as foxes, going upon the weake foundation of the walls of Jeruſalem, might eaſily demoliſh the ſame [d]: Yet theſe foxes in the end were taken and reſtrained, Firſt, partly by the Edict of *Darius* [e]: Secondly, partly by the hanging of *Haman* and his ſons, and the deſtruction of ſome other of the Jewes enemies [f].

[c] Ezr. 4. 4, 5, 23, 24.

[d] Neh. 4. 3

[e] Ezra 6. 11. —13.

[f] Heb. 7. 10. & 9. 14. —16

My beloved is mine and I am his.] The Church enjoyeth familiar and comfortable Communion with Chriſt, theſe enemies being quelled *.

Ver. 16.

Shee feedeth among the lillies.] That is, among pure and faire Chriſtians, all corruptions being weeded out, both of ſtrange wives *, of uſury, of right of the Levites maintenance and miniſtration, † and prophanation of the Sabbath.

* Neh. 8

* Ezr. 10.

† Neh 13.

Untill the day breake, and the ſhadowes flee away: turne my beloved, and be thou like a Roe or a young Hart, upon the mountaines of Bether.

Ver. 17.

Turne

Turne my beloved.] That is, returne often to viſit and ſuccour me.

As a Roe, or a young Hart upon the mountaines of Bether.] That is, ſwiftly and ſpeedily, * Bether being neere to them on the other ſide Jordan; as who ſhould ſay, Though thou ſometime turne from us, yet be not farre, but ready ever and anon to returne and ſuccour us.

* 2 Sam. 2. 29.

Untill the day breake, and the ſhadowes flee away.] That is, till Chriſt come, and the Ceremoniall ſhadowes vaniſh.

Firſt, this teacheth us that in all the inſtruments of the Churches deliverance, we ſhould ſee and diſcerne Chriſt ſpeaking and working in them: See here the Church lookes not at *Cyrus* ſo much, but at Chriſt in him. Doe they heare a rumour of a deliverance? It is the voyce of Chriſt, and it muſt needs be a ſtrong voyce which Chriſt is the author of. The wiſeſt *Daniel, Shadrach, Meſhach* and *Abednego*, they ſay it is Chriſt, and all the reſt yeeld; and the Church ſees Chriſt come skipping: Doth it ſee *Cyrus* about the wals? She ſees Chriſt there. Doth ſhe ſee *Cyrus* ſhewing himſelfe through the lattice? She ſees Chriſt there. Doth ſhe ſee

Uſe 1.

ſee when he is poſſeſſed there, and makes proclamation to them to goe up againe to Jeruſalem? She looks at it as Chriſts voyce, ſaying,* *Ariſe my love my faire one, and come away.*

* Ver. 13.

So the holy Ghoſt teacheth, what favour any doth ſhew to the Church, it is Chriſt that doth it; ſo take it, that if any good befall the Church, it is Chriſt that doth it; If any lead into captivity, *Nebuchadnezzar*, or any other, it is Chriſt that leads her into a wine Cellar: If there be any noiſe or worke of deliverance, it is Chriſt that comes leaping and skipping: So in all the calamities, and in all the bleſſings that befall the Church, aſcribe all to Chriſt:* The ſame hand that gave, the ſame hand hath taken away: † God turned the captivity of *Job*, and God turned againe the captivity of his people. This is a wonderfull ſtay to Gods Church, and to every member of it; for man cannot bring it into captivity, and bring it out againe: Mans hand cannot bring hard things upon the Church, nor bring her out againe of them; for if it were in mens hands, or in Sathans, or in our own hands, it would not goe well with

* Iob 1. 21. & 42. 10.
† Pſal. 12. 6, 11.

with us; but being in Chriſts hands alone, it may be a ſtay and a comfort.

Secondly, this teacheth us, that when the time of the Churches deliverance is come, Chriſt will come quickly and ſpeedily for her deliverance, leaping and skipping as a Roe or a Hart. The winter ſhall not alwaies remain on the Church, no, not when ſhe deſerves a black winter. *The patient abiding of the Saints ſhall not alwayes be forgotten.* Suppoſe God leades his Church into captivity ſeven yeares, yea ſeventy yeares; yet it will not alwayes continue. This may ſerve to comfort us in the diſtreſſes of the Church, at home or abroad; God will not alwayes puniſh with reproach or deſolation, but the time will come theſe will be gone and flee away. Uſe 2. Pſ. 9. 18.

Thirdly, this lets us ſee the Church profitteth by calamities; ſhee comes out better from them, then ſhee went into them: ſhe entred and went into captivity hating God, defiled with many abominations; ſhe returnes out, *My love, my faire one.* The Church of God, and the members of it are more lovely in Gods ſight by the hard times that paſſe over them. Uſe 3.

them : when this Church had beene ſeventy yeares in captivity, (a hard time it was, yet) they loſt nothing by it ; they
Ier. 12. 7, 8. kiſſed his Rod, and ſought God ; and now hee ſtiles them lovely : He loathed them becauſe they loathed him ; they were now tried and purified ; before they were loathſome, but are now lovely ; before hated, but now loved. But ſee what a bleſſed uſe chaſtiſements are of to the Church : how loathſome ſoever wee goe into captivity, when wee defile our ſelves with luſts and ſins, yet when wee have beene throughly humbled with ſome croſſes, how faire come wee out !
†Pro. 3. 11 * *My ſonne deſpiſe not the chaſtening of the Lord, neither be weary of his correction.* And why doth God ſay, *Deut.* 8. 16. *He proved them to doe them good* ; when hee ſaith, my love, it is more then lovely, it is love, it is love it ſelfe ; and faire one is
†Pſ. 119. 71. more then faire ? So, † *It is good for mee* (ſaith *David*) *that I have beene afflicted :* ſo the Church before her affliction was loathſome, foule, hated ; but now ſhe is faire and lovely.

Thou art faire oh my love.]

Uſe 4. Fourthly, this lets us ſee, the Churches

ches winter: ſtormes ſhall not alwayes lie upon her, but they ſhall in the end blow over: * *The rod of the wicked ſhall not reſt upon the lot of the righteous.* * Pſ. 125. 3.

Fifthly, we may ſee that outward comforts are eaſily able to drowne in us a longing after Gods ordinances: the contentment that ſome found in captivity, made them ſtand in need of often calling to returne to Sion. Uſe 5.

Sixthly, wee may learne here that the face of the Church is not alwayes viſible and conſpicuous in the eyes of men, but alwaies in the eyes of God; for they meet under the ſtaires, and worſhip God in holes and corners. And a while after Chriſt ſaith, Why doſt thou lie thus under the ſtaires, and in clifts of rockes, let me ſee thy face, and heare thy voyce. The Church of Rome advanceth her ſelfe that ſhe hath alwayes beene conſpicuous; but this is no true ſigne of a true Church, for the true Church is not alwayes conſpicuous: Though Chriſt alwayes ſees ſome to meet in corners and holes, yet not alwayes in ſolemne aſſemblies. The Dove of Chriſt Jeſus ſometimes makes her reſt in the rockes, and builds Uſe 6.

builds under the ſtaires, where Chriſt ſees her, but not publickly.

Uſe 7. Seventhly, ſee here the Church needs not Angels and Saints to mediate for

Verſe 14. her, her owne voyce is ſweet and countenance comely in Gods eſtimation: * *At*

* Ioh. 16. 26,27. *that day yee ſhall aske in my name; and I ſay not to you that I will pray the Father for you, for the Father himſelf loveth you becauſe yee have loved me.* Chriſt tels us, hee ſhall have no great need to pray for us, for God himſelfe loveth us, to heare our voyce, and to ſee us; let us then not be afraid to put forth our voyces: labour then for ſuch a ſpirit as to grieve for our ſinnes, and to rejoyce in Gods mercies; for God is pleaſed with that: hee is a true citizen of Sion, that when hee abounds in Gods mercies, yet hee weepes for his ſins; and when he weepes for his ſinnes, yet hee is thankefull for Gods mercies.

Uſe 8. Againe, obſerve, the Church ſhall alwayes be troubled with ſome enemies,

Verſe 16. *Take us the foxes that ſpoile the vines:* There ſhall be ever ſome *Sanballat*, or *Tobiah*, or ſome other to be nibbling at the Church of God: wonder not at this, for

for this will be ſo; but obſerve touching theſe enemies of the Church,

Firſt, they ſhall deale ſubtilly and craftily with her.

Secondly, they may diſturb and hinder her peace and proceedings; but

Thirdly, they ſhall in the end be reſtrained, as in *Revel.* 19.20. *And the beaſt was taken, and with him the falſe Prophet that wrought miracles before him, &c. Theſe both were caſt alive into a lake of fire burning with brimſtone.* Therefore let ſuch foxes know the time will come when Chriſt will either take them, and chaine them, and bind them up, as he did *Sanballat, Tobiah, Shether-boznai* *: or elſe hang them up, as hee did *Haman* and his ſonnes. Let men then take heed that they doe not puſh at the Church, for God will either chaine them up, or hang them out of the way.

* Ezra 6. 6,7.

Laſtly, here wee may ſee, when the enemies of the Church are reſtrained or deſtroyed, and corruptions weeded out of it, the Church then enjoyeth ſweet, and ſafe, and full fellowſhip with the Lord Jeſus, and hee with her: Hee gives her pledges of his favour, and ſhe gives him

Uſe 9.

him pledges of pure worſhipping him; He feeds them with his ordinances, they him with their ſacrifices. And they that would procure Chriſt this, let them provide for weeding out of their ſinnes; as uſury, wicked marriages, profanations of Gods Sabbaths, &c. Such Churches ſhall be ſweet, and much ſweet ſolace ſhall they enjoy one with another, Chriſt with them, and they with him.

THE

THE CANTICLES, OR SONG OF SONGS opened and explained.

The Text.

CHAP. 3.

BY night on my bed I ſought him whom my ſoule loveth, I ſought him, but I found him not.

2 *I will riſe now, and goe about the city in the ſtreetes, and in the broad wayes, I will ſeeke him whom my ſoule loveth: I ſought him but I found him not.*

3 *The watch-men that go about the city found me, to whom I ſaid, Saw ye him whom my ſoule loveth?*

4 *It was but a little that I paſſed from them but I found him whom my ſoule loveth: I held him and would not let him goe, untill I had brought him into my mothers houſe, and into the chamber of her that conceived me.*

5 *I charge you, O yee daughters of Jeruſalem, by the Roes, and by the Hinds of the field, that yee ſtirre not up, nor awake my love till he pleaſe.*

6 *Who is this that commeth out of the wilderneſſe like pillars of ſmoake, perfumed with mirrhe and frankincenſe, with all powders of the merchant?*

7 *Behold his bed, which is Solomons: threeſcore valiant men are about it, of the valiant of Iſrael.*

8 *They all hold ſwords, being expert in warre: Every man hath his ſword upon his thigh, becauſe of feare in the night.*

9 *King Solomon made himſelfe a charet of the wood of Lebanon.*

10 *He made the pillars thereof of ſilver, the bottome thereof of gold, the covering of it of purple, the middeſt thereof being paved with love, for the daughters of Jeruſalem.*

11 *Goe forth, O ye daughters of Sion, and behold King Solomon with the crowne wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his eſpouſals: and in the day of the gladneſſe of his heart.*

THE EXPLANATION.

Cant. 3. ver. 1. *By night on my bed I ſought him whom my ſoule loveth, I ſought him, but I found him not, &c.*

THis Chapter ſetteth forth the eſtate of the Church from after the dayes of *Nehemiah*, to the time of Chriſts ſojourning here on earth, in a two-fold period:

Firſt, under the Maccabees, ver. 1.—6.

Secondly, in *John Baptiſt's* time, verſe 6.—11.

The ſtate of the Church in the Maccabees time was, partly, full of calamities, as a time of darkeneſſe, *By night I ſought him*; and partly ſweetned with ſome more comfortable iſſue. Verſe 1.

This calamity is ſet forth,

Firſt, By reſemblance to night, *By night I ſought him.*

Secondly, By the abſence of Chriſt, whom ſhe ſought in vaine: Verſe 2.

Firſt, *In her bed*, verſe 1.

Secondly, *In the ſtreets of the City*, verſe 2.

Thirdly, *Amongſt the watchmen*, ver. 3.

The comfortable iſſue of her ſeeking Chriſt is ſet forth,

Firſt, *By her finding of him*, verſe 4.

Secondly, *By her holding of him*, ver. 4.

Thirdly, *By her bringing of him into her mothers houſe*, verſe 4.

Fourthly, *By her charge to the daughters of Jeruſalem*, to walk circumſpectly, that this eſtate be not interrupted, verſe 5.

Verſe 1. *By night*:] that is, in time of darkneſſe, and publicke calamity; when *Antiochus Epiphanes*, the little horne waxed exceeding great, waſted the pleaſant land, caſt ſome of the hoſt and ſtarres of heaven to the ground; when hee tooke away the daily ſacrifice, and trode downe the Sanctuary, and caſt downe the truth to the ground; when he robbed the Temple, murthered the people, ſpoiled the City, made lawes for profaning the Sabbath, for offering Swines fleſh, for neglecting Circumciſion, when he ſet up the Statues of *Jupiter Olympias*, the abomination of deſolation in the holy place, when he burnt the bookes of the Law, and made it death to have a Teſtament; when he brake downe the Altar and ſet up another, when hee put women to death

Dan. 8. 9. — 12.

death who had cauſed children to be circumciſed, and hanged children upon the neckes of their mothers, 1 *Mac.* 1. 23. to the end.

In my bed:] Not in my bed of eaſe and ſloth, (as ſome take it) for what eaſe could the Church take in the night time of calamity? but in my bed, that is, in the place and duties of Gods worſhip, the Temple and the ordinances. Chap 1. 16. & 3. 7.

I ſought him whom my ſoule loveth.] I deſired and endeavoured to have fellowſhip with Chriſt, *but I found him not*, the Sanctuary being polluted and the daily ſacrifice taken away, and profane Idols ſet up in the place.

In the ſtreets of the City:] that is, in the open aſſemblies of the faithfull, in the Synagogues, in the cities of Judea and Jeruſalem; but behold there Altars erected to Idols, and incenſe burned, and the books of the Law caſt into the fire*: Yea, behold the citizens of Jeruſalem all fled and gone *: and the reſt went in proceſſion to *Bacchus*†. *Verſe* 2. *1 Mac. 1. 57.—59. * 1 Mac. 1. 40. † 2 Mac. 6. 7.

The watch-men that goe about the citie:] To wit the Levites, who anſwered her with ſilence; but a little after ſhe found *Verſe* 3.

succour at Modin, for the Priests, *Mattathias* and his sonnes, *Judas*, *Jonathan*, and *Simon*, and the rest that went about to repaire the ruines of the Church and Common-wealth; to these the faithfull Church repairing, * and finding deliverance and comfort, by *Judas* especially, or rather by Christ in him †, Shee left him not till shee had brought him into the Temple, where she soone after cleansed the Sanctuary, and restored the purity of Gods worship, and offered sacrifice according to the Law, so that she found great comfort and joy in the duties of Gods worship *. Thus againe found they Christ in a typicall Saviour, held him by faith, and, with courage and zeale, brought him into the Temple and Sanctuary, the house and chamber of her mother; that is, of the former Church of Israel, or of the Catholike Church, for the Church of the former ages is the mother of the latter; or the whole Church is the mother of each part in usuall phrase of Hebrew speech: The Temple is the house of both, the Sanctuary is the chamber of her that bare her.

* 1 Mac. 2.42,43.

† 1 Mac. 3.6,—8.

* 1 Mac. 4.42,46.

I charge you, O yee daughters of Jeruſalem, by the Roes and by the Hinds of the field, that ye ſtirre not up, nor awake my love till he pleaſe. Verſe 5.

I charge you, &c.] See the ſame words opened, *Chap.* 2. 7. The Church chargeth all her daughters, all her members, to take heed, leſt by their undiſcreet dealing, or any wicked practiſe, they ſtirre up the neighbour Princes of Syria and Egypt; not to diſturbe the peace of the Church, and to provoke Chriſt againe to leave them deſolate; which though *Jaſon* and *Menelaus* and *Alcimus* broke †, yet they prevailed not ſo farre, but Chriſt was ſtill found in the Temple of the faithfull till his comming in the fleſh. † 2 Mac. 14. 14.

Who is this that commeth out of the wilderneſſe like pillars of ſmoake, perfumed with mirrhe and frankincenſe, with all powders of the merchant? Verſe 6.

Who is this that commeth out of the wilderneſſe.] This is a deſcription of *John Baptiſt*, and of the Church gathered by his Miniſtery in the wilderneſſe: which is ſet forth,

Firſt, by the admiration and inquiſitiveneſſe of the old Synagogue after him

and his baptisme: Who is this that commeth, or ariseth, &c. which was fulfilled *: To whom the Jewes sent Priests and Levites to aske him, Who art thou? and all men mused whether he were not the Christ.

*Ioh. 1. 19 Luk. 3. 15.

Secondly, by the place of his arising, and the Church with him in the wildernesse †.

† Luke 3. 2. —4. Mar. 1. 3, 4

Thirdly, by the manner of arising, like pillars of smoake, which

Firſt, ariseth from fire, as the Church arose from zeale and fervencie of *Johns* ministery.

Secondly, ascendeth on high, as the propagation of this Church did, even to Jerusalem †.

† Mat. 3. 5, 6.

Thirdly, fils the countrey, as the Church did with rumour and increase of it *.

* Mat. 3. 5, 6.

Fourthly, by the excellent fragrancie and sweetnesse of the graces thereof perfumed †, preserving from putrefaction: such was the powerfull zeale of *John* and his ministery, strongly fragrant as Myrrhe, and preserving his hearers from pharisaicall hypocricy; Frankincense is of like strong fragrancy, and of chiefe use

† Chap. 1. 13.

Mat. 3. 7. —10.

in

in making of the holy incenſe †; by which prayer was ſignified *, to intimate the fragrancy and fervency of his prayers, who taught all his diſciples to pray b.

With all powders of the merchant.] to wit, perfumed with the ſweet graces of God, c filled with the holy Ghoſt above all Prophets, yea above all that were borne of women d; whence alſo he ſeaſoned all ſorts of his hearers with graces and directions fit for their ſeverall callings e.

† Exod. 30 34.
* Pſa. 141 2.
b Luk. 11. 1.
c Luk. 1. 15.
d Mat. 11. 9, 11.
e Luk. 3. 10. —14.

Fifthly, by the doctrine of *John*, who expreſly preached the Lord Jeſus manifeſted in the fleſh.

Behold his bed which is Solomons, threeſcore valiant men are about it, of the valiant of Iſrael. *Verſe 7.*

Behold his bed which is Solomons.] this doctrine the Church of that time received and beleeved: In which doctrine, that firſt Church firſt diſcerned and beleeved,

Firſt, the Temple of Chriſts body; for the bed f was taken, as alſo it is here, for the Temple, which was the type of Chriſts body g.

f Chap. 1. 16. & 3. 1.
g Ioh. 2. 19, 20.

Now, this as *John* pointed h, *Behold the lambe*

h Iohn 1. 29, 30.

lambe of God; as here it is said, *Behold his bed.* This Temple it is the Temple of *Solomon*, of Christ; in him the God-head
Col. 2. 9. dwelleth bodily.

Secondly, the guard of Angels attending it, to prevent the feare of *Herods* enmity and others.
Ioh. 1. 51. Mat. 2. 13. 19.

Thirdly, the maker of his humanity, *verse 9.* King *Solomon* made himselfe a Couch, the word may be translated Coach or Couch: this latter I rather take, partly for the Etymologe of *Apirion*, *fol.* 38. to be fruitfull as the brides bed is, and partly for agreement with the former word Bed, *ver.* 7.

No earthly father, but Christ by his owne Spirit made his owne body, and his owne bed in his mothers wombe i.
i Luk. 1. 35.

Fourthly, the matter of it, the wood of Lebanon, for the Virgin *Mary* dwelt in Nazareth of Galile at the foot of Lebanon.

As *Solomons* Temple, the type of Christs body, was made of the wood of
Hos. 1. Lebanon, the Cedar which is free from corruption; so was the body of Christ
k Psal. 16. 10. found from seeing corruption k.

Fifthly, the ornaments of it, which were

First,

First, partly his offices:

1. Priestly, as pillars of silver abiding the fire of Gods wrath, and pure as silver tried in the fire. Heb.7.26.

2. Propheticall, delivering us a word precious as gold, even as fine gold [l]. l Psal. 19. 10.

3. Kingly, whence it is said, *ver.* 10. *The covering of it of purple*, the royall ornament of Kings.

Secondly, partly, the affection wherein he undertooke and executed these offices, love of the daughters of Jerusalem, *ver.* 10. All these *John* declareth [m]. Verse 10. m Ioh. 3. 29. to the end.

Secondly, hee exhorteth and stirreth up the faithfull to behold,

First, Christ [n]. n Ioh. 1. 29.— end

Secondly, [o] *The ornaments wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals.* The day of his espousals was the day when God the Father contracted him with the Church *; whence after hee is called the Bridegroome [p], and *John* the Bridegroomes friend, his Disciples the children of the Bride-chamber: And the Church henceforward in this booke is called the Spouse, not before. *The crowne wherewith his mother crowned him*, is the testimony of Christs soveraignty, o Ver. 11. * Mat. 3. 17. p Ioh. 3. 29.

raignty, which *John* and the faithfull gave him q.

q Ioh. 1. 33, 34, 35, 49. & 3. 29. —36.

Firſt of the eſtate of the Church under the Maccabees.

Uſe 1. Firſt, this doth teach us with what intent wee are to come before God in the publicke aſſemblies, namely, to ſeeke Chriſt the love of our ſoules; not to ſhew our fine garments, wantonly to gaze at beauties; not to ſatisfie the Law or friends, for faſhions ſake, but to ſeeke Chriſt inſtructing us in temptations: Some come to catch ſomething from Chriſt to entrap him, &c. but it is our duty to come unto him, as a Spouſe to her husband, for ſeed; ſo we muſt come to Chriſt, that hee may caſt the ſeeds of grace into our ſoules, that we may bring forth fruit unto him.

Uſe 2. Secondly, this lets us ſee the changeable eſtate of the Church; ſhee that rejoyced in the preſence and fellowſhip of Chriſt, and could ſay, * *My beloved is mine, and I am his*, now ſeekes him every where, and with much difficulty and anguiſh *. And ſo it is oft with every true member of the Church, as wee may ſee it was with *David* †: ſo it is now with our

* Cant. 2. 16.

* Verſe 1, 2, 3.

† Pſal. 119 24, 25. & 30. 6, 7, 8.

our brethren beyond the ſeas, whom you might have commended a yeare or two agoe, and have found Chriſt there; but now he is gone, ſhe ſeekes him but findes him not: See the Church of God ſometime enjoyes all the ordinances of God, ſometimes none; ſo a Chriſtian ſoule ſometimes hath Chriſts left hand under her head, and his right hand to embrace her, ſoone after ſhe findes him not ſo: Wee muſt not condemne the Church for this; for they that are tenderly beloved of Chriſt may ſometimes ſeeke him and not finde him. Cant. 2. 6.

Thirdly, this may comfort ſuch as ſeeke Chriſt in all his ordinances: they ſhall either finde him in them; or, after the uſe of them, in ſome unexpected or extraordinary helpe. The Church here that found not Chriſt in the Temple, nor in the aſſemblies and recourſe of Chriſtian people, nor in conference with the Prieſts, found him ſoone after in an unexpected and extraordinary helpe, even *Judas Maccabeus*, verſe 4. for indeed it was extraordinary for the tribe of *Levi* to take up the ſword and ſcepter, which indeed belonged to *Judah*: ſo you ſee when Uſe 3.

when ordinary meanes faile, God will be found in extraordinary: Whoſoever then would finde Chriſt, and ſeeke him every where, they ſhall ſurely finde him either in his ordinances, or out of them.

Uſe 4. Fourthly, this lets us ſee the affectionate cleaving of ſuch to Chriſt, as have long ſought him and not found him till at laſt: ſuch lay hold on him, and will not let him goe, *verſe* 4. which is one Reaſon why Chriſt ſometimes hides himſelfe from us, that wee might ſeeke him the more diligently, and, having found him, cleave to him more ſtedfaſtly; and this God lookes for at the hands of his.

Uſe 5. Fifthly, this doth exhort Chriſtians that live among bad neighbours to walk the more circumſpectly, as the daughters of Jeruſalem are here charged upon oath to doe, *ver.* 5. being between the Syrians and Egyptians. It is a charge given by the Church to her daughters, to take heed they ſtirre not up her love, nor awake Chriſt till he pleaſe.

Two Reaſons are given for it.

Firſt, It may provoke Chriſt to bring another eſtate upon the Church which

which will not bee good for it.

Secondly, in regard of fearefull Christians, for they will start away; many are willing to come into the Church, but if the profession of Christ be troublesome and hot, they will not abide it: therefore this charge is needfull that we may walke holily, that Christ be not stirred up, nor these fearefull Christians discouraged. See this handled, *Chap.* 2. *verse* 7.

Thus farre the first part, in the time of the *Maccabees*: Now *Secondly of the estate of the Church in* John Baptist's *time.*

This is first to shew us, that God can raise up a Church even in the wildernesse, to the admiration of observers: and so hee can raise up our neighbour Churches, now brought to a wildernesse. This may comfort us in regard of them; for though they be now desolate, yet we may hope a time will come when they shall rise againe. Use 1. Verse 6.

Secondly, see here is a part of the duty of ancient Christians, not to maligne the graces of God in those that come after them, but to admire them*, *Who is it that* Use 2. * Verse 6.

that commeth out of the wilderneſſe like pillars of ſmoake, perfumed with Myrrhe and Frankincenſe, &c.

Uſe 3. Thirdly, this ſhewes what gifts and graces are moſt requiſite in a Miniſter, and doe moſt adorne him, even zeale in his Miniſtery, and fervency in prayer, and all ſorts of ſweet graces to ſeaſon and direct all ſorts of his people in their ſeverall callings, as *John* did *, when the people came and ſaid, *What ſhall we doe? He anſwered and ſaid, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none, &c.* So *John* was perfumed with graces for all men: for men muſt not come into the Miniſtery with judgement and learning alone, for theſe may come from nature; but they muſt come perfumed with graces, to keepe themſelves and others from putrefaction; yea, they muſt labour for thoſe graces which will give a ſtrong ſent to ſave themſelves and others.

Verſe 6. * Luke 3. 10.—14.

Uſe 4. Fourthly, this ſhewes us the manhood and Godhead of Chriſt; Chriſts humane nature is the Temple, or bed wherein the Godhead reſteth bodily, and the Godhead made this Temple or bed for himſelfe, no earthly father for him.

Verſe 7,9.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, see here the protection and gardiance the Angels give to Christ, and in him to the Church and all his members, *verse* 7,8. Use 5. Psal.91. 11, 12. Psal.34.7. 2 Kin.6. 16,17. Heb.1.14. Rev.5.11. & 7.11.

Sixthly, wee may here see in Christ whatsoever is behoovefull for all our salvations. In regard of his Priestly office hee is pure as silver, to cleanse our impurity, and to abide the fire: In regard of his Propheticall office hee is precious as gold, to enrich our poverty: In regard of his Royall and Kingly office he is glorious as purple, and cloathed with it, to advance our baseneſſe: His heart, or middest, is even paved with love of us: His heart is an hearth (for so the word signifieth) whereon the fire of his love towards us burneth continually; let us then love the Lord Jesus againe, and receive the seeds and fruits of his grace, and then shall we see his heart flaming with love to us: and then whatsoever befals, bloudshed, warre, captivity, &c. all comes from love; his whole heart is paved with love. Use 6. Verse 10.

Seventhly, let us take up our thoughts and meditations about Christ; let us goe forth and behold him; let his Use 7.

abundant graces fill our empty ſoules.

Uſe 8. Eighthly, if thou beeſt a daughter of Sion, thou art contracted to Chriſt; and know it by this, Doſt thou read his letters? art thou delighted with them? and doſt thou rejoyce to ſpeake to him again by prayer? If thou doſt, it may be the joy of thy heart, for thy eſtate is good.

Uſe 9. Laſtly, this doth exhort us all to give up our ſelves as ſpouſes to Chriſt, and that with all gladneſſe of heart, ſince he is affected to us, who yet hath nothing from us but debts and beggery: and they that doe give themſelves up to Chriſt, need not feare wanting comfort; for no ſpoules ſhall finde ſuch comfort as they. Shall he be glad to have us, a company of beggars; yea, as I may ſay, a company of deaths? and was it the gladneſſe of his heart to be eſpouſed to us, which was when his Father contracted him to us, and ſhall we think it a day of deading to ſet our feet into Chriſts bed? Al the merchants cannot ſet forth our excellency, when he ſhall pay all our debts, and adorn us with all his graces; therefore let us go forth, and bring him home to us, we ſhall then finde him comfortable to us in the day of eſpouſals.

THE CANTICLES, OR SONG OF SONGS opened and explained.

The Text.

CHAP. 4.

Behold, thou art faire my love, behold, thou art faire, thou haſt doves eyes within thy locks: thy haire is as a flock of goats, that appear from mount Gilead.

2 *Thy teeth are like a flocke of ſheepe that are even ſhorne, which came up from the waſhing: whereof every one beare twins, and none is barren among them.*

3 *Thy lips are like a thread of ſcarlet, and thy ſpeech is comely: thy temples are like a piece of a pomegranate within thy locks.*

4 *Thy necke is like to the tower of David, builded for an armory, whereon there hang a thouſand bucklers, all ſhields of mighty men.*

5 *Thy two breaſts are like two young Roes, that*

are twins, which feed among the lillies.

6 Untill the day breake, and the ſhadowes flee away; I will get me to the mountains of Myrrhe, and to the hill of Frankincenſe.

7 Thou art all faire, my love, there is no ſpot in thee.

8 Come with me from Lebanon (my ſpouſe) with me from Lebanon: look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the Lions dens, from the mountains of the Leopards.

9 Thou haſt raviſhed my heart, my ſiſter, my ſpouſe; thou haſt raviſhed my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chaine of thy necke.

10 How faire is thy love, my ſiſter, my ſpouſe! how much better is thy love then wine! and the ſmell of thy ointments then all ſpices!

11 Thy lips, O my ſpouſe, drop as the honey-comb: honey and milke are under thy tongue, & the ſmell of thy garments is like the ſmell of Lebanon.

12 A garden inclоſed is my ſiſter, my ſpouſe, a ſpring ſhut up, a fountaine ſealed.

13 Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranats, with pleaſant fruits, Camphire, with Spikenard.

14 Spikenard and Saffron, Calamus and Cynamon, with all trees of Frankincenſe, Myrrhe, and Aloes, with all the chiefe ſpices.

15 A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and ſtreames from Lebanon.

16 Awake, O Northwind, and come thou South, blow upon my garden, that the ſpices thereof may flow out: let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleaſant fruits.

THE

The Explanation.

Cant. 4. 1.—6. *Behold, thou art faire my love, behold thou art faire, thou haſt doves eyes within thy locks: thy haire is as a flock of goates, that appeare from mount Gilead, &c.*

THis Chapter deſcribes the eſtate of the Church in her periods:

Firſt, in Chriſts time, under his Miniſtery, *verſe* 1.—6.

Secondly, after his aſcenſion, under the Apoſtles, *verſe* 7.—11.

Thirdly, after their departure, during the firſt ten perſecutions, *verſe* 12.—16.

The Church in Chriſts time is commended and deſcribed,

Firſt, by her beauty in generall, *Behold, thou art faire my love, behold, thou art faire.*

Secondly, the beauty of her ſeverall parts, at that time moſt conſpicuous, as

Firſt, *Of her eyes*, verſe 1.
Secondly, *Of her haire*, verſe 1.
Thirdly, *Of her teeth*, verſe 2.
Fourthly, *Of her lips*, verſe 3.
Fifthly, *Of her temples*, verſe 3.
Sixthly, *Of her necke*, verſe 4.
Seventhly, *Of her breaſts*, verſe 5.

Secondly, the death of Christ falling out in her time, *verse 6.*

Behold thou art faire:] faire twice repeated implies, by an usuall Hebraisme, that shee was very faire: and beloved twice repeated, argues her eminent beauty was very conspicuous; such was the estate of the Church gathered by his Ministery and flocking after him.

First, it was faire and beautifull, partly in her flocking after him [a].

Secondly, leaving all to follow him, * hanging upon his mouth, and wondring at the gracious words and deeds comming from him.

Secondly, In his both,

First, presence with her, as her light.

Secondly, decking of her by his Ministery.

This beauty of the Church was well knowne, yet ought to have beene better observed:

First of all, by the children of wisedome [c].

Secondly, of all the [d] Greekes, even strangers, [e] of the Pharisees and Elders.

Thou hast Doves eyes within thy lockes:] Doves (as before *Cha.* 1, 15.) are noted, First,

[a] Mat. 4. 25.
* Mat. 19. 19 27. Luk. 19. 48. & 9. 43.
[b] Ioh. 3. 29 Ioh. 12. 35
[c] Mat. 11. 19.
[d] Ioh. 12. 20, 21.
[e] Ioh. 12. 19.

Firſt, for their chaſteneſſe.

Secondly, loathing of uncleanneſſe: but there is with all in their eyes,

1. Cleanneſſe,

2. Simplicity.

This implies that the Church at that time

Firſt, ſaw more clearely ſundry truths about Chriſt then the Fathers had done [f], or the preſent Governours [g].

Secondly, was of a ſimple and innocent looke and demeanour [h].

Thirdly, looked with a chaſte eye, after Chriſt alone [i].

Fourthly, loathed the uncleanneſſe of Phariſaicall ſuperſtitions [k].

Within thy lockes.] For their knowledge, though cleere in many things, yet perceived not ſundry plaine points: as,

Firſt, the death and reſurrection of Chriſt *.

Secondly, the leaven of the Phariſees †.

As the eye within lockes of haire is hindred from diſcerning things lying open before it.

Thy haire as a flocke of Goats that appeare from mount Gilead.]

f Luk. 10, 23, 24.
g Ioh. 9. 39.
h Mat. 10. 16. Ioh. 1. 47.
i Ioh. 6. 68
k Mat. 15, 1, 2.
* Luk. 18. 32, 33, 34.
† Mar. 8. 15 Luk. 12. 1 Mar. 16 6

Haire, though it hang long upon the head, yet it may in time either,

First, fall of it selfe.

Secondly, be cut off: so were the common Christians of that time (as it were) haire,

1. For multitude.
2. Hanging on Christ the head.
3. Falling many of them from him:

* Ioh. 6. 66. First, either of themselves *, Or

*Mat. 27. 20. Ioh. 11. 42, 43. † Ioh. 2. 23.— 25. Secondly, cut off by the practises of the *Priests: hence it was that Jesus durst not commit himselfe to them †.

As a flocke of Goats,] which are wont,

First, to assemble themselves in companies; so did the people gather after Christ.

* Mat 9. 36. Secondly, to be without a shepheard, as this people were *.

Thirdly, to feed a farre off, and that somewhat dangerously, upon Rocks.

* Mat. 8. 3 * Ioh. 9. 22. So the people came from farre to heare Christ *, and were in danger for feeding on him *.

Verse 2. *Thy teeth are like a flocke of sheepe that are even shorne, which came up from the washing: whereof every one beare twins, and none is barren among them.*]

The

The ſheepe whereto theſe teeth are likened, are ſet forth,

Firſt, by their even-ſhorneneſſe.

Secondly, by their cleanneſſe, comming up from the waſhing.

Thirdly, by their fruitfulneſſe, Every one bringeth forth twins, none barren.

Firſt, even ſet, none gaping out.

Secondly, white and cleane.

Thirdly, each anſwering to his fellow in the other jaw, none wanting, as it is a praiſe to the teeth to be. The teeth are ſuch as chew the meat, and prepare it for the reſt of the body; ſuch in that Church were the Apoſtles, whom our Saviour calls a little flocke * : they were all,

Firſt, even ſet, and even ſhorne, none burſting out beyond his fellowes : *Peters* ſupremacy ſtretched not beyond the reſt of the Apoſtles †.

The teeth of innocent ſheepe are even ſet : They that have tuſhes longer then the other teeth are hurtfull and ravenous beaſts, as Dogs, Bears, Lions, &c. Ten of the Apoſtles diſdained the motion of ſupremacy.

Secondly, came up from *Johns* baptiſme, and therefore when *Judas* fell away

* Luk. 12. 32.

† Mat. 16. 19. compared with Ioh. 20. 23 & Mat. 18 18. Mat. 20. 20, 25. Mar. 10. 40, 42. Luk. 22. 24, 25.

away, they muſt needs ſupply his place
Act. 1. 21. 22. out of the number of ſuch as had continued with them from *Johns* baptiſme.

Secondly, they were ſutable each one to his fellow, and therefore the ſeventy
* Luk. 10. 1. were ſent out by couples *.

But eſpecially they were fruitfull in bringing home many lambs to Chriſt; & hence the ſeventy returned with joy to
* Luk. 10. 17, 18. Chriſt *; and Sathan is ſaid to fall downe from heaven before them like lightning.

Verſe 3. *Thy lips are like a thread of Scarlet, and thy ſpeech is comely: thy temples are like a piece of a pomegranate within thy lockes.*

Thy lips are like a thread of Scarlet, and thy ſpeech is comely.] Both ſignifying the delivery or utterance of the Doctrine of the Church at that time, which was

Firſt, as a thread ſlender (*tenui filo*,) not plump or ſwelling with humane eloquence, but ſavouring of Fiſher-like tenuitie and ſimplicitie.

Secondly, as a thread of Scarlet; for as Scarlet or Purple is a princely and royall weare, ſo their Doctrine was,

Firſt, touching the kingdom of heaven
* Mat. 10. 7. *.

Secondly, though tender, yet deeply dyed in graine with royall Majeſty and authority

authority of the Spirit of God.

Thy temples are like a piece of a Pomegranate within thy lockes.] Temples of the head are they by which the whole body watcheth or reſteth; they are ſuch therefore as watch over the body, and for it. The Pomegranate was of much uſe in the old Tabernacle and Temple: * *Aarons* coat was hanged with Pomegranates and Bels; Bels for ſound of doctrine and prayer, Pomegranates for reſtraining and healing the diſtempers and diſeaſes of the people. Pomegranates are commended by *Fernelius* *

* Exod. 28.34.

* *Fernel. p.* 26.

Firſt, for repreſſing the heat of Choler,

Secondly, the malignity, rottenneſſe and agrimony of feavers.

Thirdly, the looſeneſſe of the belly.

Secondly, for comforting and ſtrengthning the ſtomacke and bowels, to the keeping backe all fainting †. This office the Eccleſiaſticall governours of the Church doe performe to it; they repreſſe the heat of fallings out among brethren, the notorious abuſes, the looſeneſſe, or diſtempredneſſe of the people; they comfort the feeble, and binde up the weake, and are therefore fitly reſembled by

† *Fernelius Method. medend. lib. 5. cap. 3.*

by Pomegranates, yea by a piece of a Pomegranate: for it is not the whole body of the Pomegranate that doth this; but it, broken in pieces, by his juice and rinde is medicinable.

Within thy lockes:] Becauſe though Chriſt eſtabliſhed Diſcipline, and delivered it to the Church in his time *; yet it was not diſplayed, nor ſhewed it ſelfe in open execution till after his reſurrection †.

* Mat. 18. 15, —17.

† 1 Cor. 5, 1. —6.

Thy neck is like the tower of David, *&c.*] The necke is that part that joyneth head and body together; now that which joyneth Chriſt and his Church together, is our faith: which faith in ſome of the members of that Church in Chriſts time, was obſerved to be ſtrong and great *; and therefore is here fitly compared to the tower of *David*, *for an Armory*, (whereof we read) * *whereon there hanged a thouſand bucklers, all ſhields of mighty men.* It ſeemes *Davids* mighty men hanged up their ſhields in this Armory againſt times of warre; and ſo in like manner all the Worthies of Iſrael; all the faithfull before Chriſt, hanged their ſhields of faith upon Chriſt, in whom

Verſe 4.

* Mat. 8. 10. & 15. 28.

* Neh. 9. 25, 26.

whom the faith of his Church was as a ſtrong Armory †. Faith is not ſo much a tower of ſtrength in it ſelfe, as in Chriſt whom it apprehendeth. † Heb. 11. 13.

Thy two breaſts are like two young Roes that are twinnes, which feed among the lillies. *Verſe* 5.

Thy two breaſts are like two young Roes that are twins.] The breaſts give milke: now the breaſts that give milke to the Church, the ſincere * milke of the word, are the Miniſters, which in the Church of Chriſts time were firſt the Apoſtles, ſecondly, the ſeventy: and are therefore here called two breaſts, and both as Roes, becauſe not tyed to any certaine place within all the people of the Jewes; for Roes ſtay not long in a place: And both as twins, becauſe of equall commiſſion, being both ſent alike to the whole houſe of Iſrael, though, after the Reſurrection, the Apoſtles commiſſion was enlarged further then that of the ſeventy. * 2 Pet. 2. 2.

Which feed among the lillies.] For they were ſent not onely among the Gentiles or Samaritans, but amongſt,

Firſt, the loſt ſheepe of the houſe of Iſrael. 10. Mat.

Secondly,

Secondly, the true-hearted or well-affected of the Israelites.

Mat. 10. 11.

These faithfull are here compared to the lillies,

First, for their whiteneſſe and purity of innocency.

Secondly, for their amiableneſſe.

Verſe 6. *Untill the day breake, and the ſhadowes flee away: I will get mee to the mountaines of Myrrhe, and to the hill of Frankincenſe.*

Untill the day breake, and the ſhadowes flee away.] That is, untill the light of the Goſpell breake forth, and the ſhadowes of the Moſaicall Ceremonies vaniſh.

I will get me to the mountains of Myrrhe, and to the hill of Frankincenſe.] That is, to the mounts,

First, of *Olivet*, Secondly, of *Golgotha*, } Where he ſuffered in the Garden, and on the Croſſe, and nailed to his Croſſe all the ſhadowes of the Law, and, in fulfilling them, * aboliſhed them.

* Col. 2. 14.

Myrrhe and *Frankincenſe*, are wont to be uſed in imbalming, and with ſuch like Chriſt himſelfe at his death was to have beene imbalmed, if his reſurrection had not prevented the women. Beſides, the

Joh. 19. 39, 40. Luk. 23. 46.

paſſion

paſſion of Chriſt was a ſacrifice of a ſweet ſmelling ſavour to God, and therefore the place thereof is fitly called the *Mountaine of Myrrhe, and hill of Frankincenſe*; though otherwiſe the mountaine of Myrrhe may well be Mount *Calvary*, or *Golgotha*, the place of his death; and the hill of Frankincenſe mount *Olivet*, in regard of his aſcenſion into Heaven; yea, even Heaven it ſelfe, whither he aſcended, may be well called the hill of Frankincenſe for ſweetneſſe.

This firſt doth teach us that a Church may be beautifull in Gods ſight, though conſiſting Uſe 1.

Firſt, of meane perſons.

Secondly, of ſuch as were ſometimes notorious offenders, as Publicans and Harlots: and from hence

Firſt, poore people,

Secondly, ſinners, yea ugly ſinners are to be exhorted to repentance and ſeeking after Chriſt: It makes them truely amiable in Chriſts eies, though otherwiſe in themſelves never ſo meane and foule.

From hence alſo poore ſinners may take comfort; though loaden with the ſenſe of their deformities, they in Chriſts

Chriſts eyes are very beautifull.

From hence alſo the Separatiſts may learne, that notwithſtanding many abuſes in their teachers, or others of the Church, as the Scribes and Phariſees whom the people were to heare, yet the Church may be denominated from the better part very faire, as a heape of wheat, though covered over with abundance of chaffe.

Mat. 23. 23.

Secondly, this may teach Miniſters how to frame themſelves to be amiable in Gods ſight, (*viz.*)

Firſt, by carrying themſelves evenly with their brethren.

Secondly, by cleanſing their hearts and lives by the power of Baptiſme.

Thirdly, by fruitfulneſſe, and faithfulneſſe in their Miniſtery.

Fourthly, by not affecting carnall eloquence, but gracious and deep-dyed powerfull utterance; for ſwelling words of humane wiſedome make mens preaching ſeeme to Chriſt (as it were) a blubber-lipt Miniſtery.

Fifthly, by reſtraining abuſes and offences amongſt the people, and ſtrengthning and comforting the feeble minded.

Sixthly,

Sixthly, by feeding their people with * ſincere milke, and not being drie nurſes. * 1 Pet. 2. 2.

Seventhly, by taking moſt delight in converſing among lillies, their well-affected people, though ſeeking alſo to winne all, and therefore ſometimes converſing with them as the Phyſicians among the ſicke.

This may teach eccleſiaſticall Governours their office in the former vertues of the Pomegranate, to repreſſe the heat of abuſes, the looſeneſſe and diſtempredneſſe of the people, to comfort the feeble, and binde up the weake, &c. Uſe 3. Verſe 3.

Fourthly, this may teach the people how to approve themſelves to Chriſt, in looking after Chriſt in knowledge, ſimplicity, chaſtity of Spirit, loathing ſuperſtitions, and places of bad reſort.

Aſpicis ut veniunt ad candida tecta Columbæ.

Thou ſee'ſt how Pigeons take their flight,

To houſes that be faire and white.

For, what ſhould Chriſtians doe in filthy Taverns, Ale-houſes, Stews, &c. in ſtrength of faith rooting and building

ding themſelves upon Chriſt.

Cant. 4. 7.—11. *Thou art all faire my love, there is no ſpot in thee.*] In theſe words wee have a deſcription of the eſtate of the Church ſoone after Chriſts aſcenſion, gathered and built up by the Miniſtery of the Apoſtles, which they call the Apoſtolicke or primitive Church.

This Church is here ſet forth,

Firſt, by her compleat beauty, her full faireneſſe, *ver.* 7.

Secondly, by Chriſts calling her to behold the calling of the Gentiles, *ver.* 8.

Thirdly, by the raviſhing beauty of a ſiſter Church at that time:

1. In one of her eyes. } *verſe* 9.
2. One chaine of her necke. }

Fourthly, by her love, which is ſet forth,

1. By the faireneſſe of it. }
2. By the ſweetneſſe of it a- } *verſe* 10.
bove wine,

Fifthly, by the flowingneſſe, ſweetneſſe, and wholſomneſſe of her doctrine, *v.* 11.

Sixthly, by the ſmell of her garments, like that of Lebanon, *ver.* 11.

Thou art faire:] The faireneſſe of the Church was acknowledged before, but never

never till now the perfect faireneſſe. All compleat faireneſſe or beauty ſtandeth in theſe three things:

Firſt, in the integrity of all the parts and members of the body; for if any be wanting, it is a maimed, a blemiſhed body.

Secondly, in the Symmetry, or fit proportion of all the members one to another.

Thirdly, in the good complexion, or colour of them all. Looke what parts are requiſite for the compleat integrity of a faire Church, they are all found in the Apoſtolicke Church in comely proportion of beauty; for looke,

Firſt, at their doctrine, and it was,

1. Free from all errour, ſo farre as it was diſpenſed by the Apoſtles, Prophets, Evangeliſts of that time *, who likewiſe ſuffered no weeds of falſe doctrine to grow under them *.

2. Their doctrine was compleat, even the whole counſell of God †.

3. It was diſpenſed in powerfull ſimplicity *.

Secondly, looke at their worſhip, and you may ſee,

1. The purity of Gods ordinances,

* Act. 28. 22, 23.
* Rev. 2. 2
† Act. 20. 27.
* 1 Cor. 2. 4. Act. 2. 37, 44. & 4. 4

without mixture of humane inventions*.

2. Order, decency, edification of all aimed at in all the duties administred.

3. Fervency and frequency in prayer* and fasting.

Thirdly, looke at their Christian communion, and you may see

1. Their unity one with another *.

2. Love, and large-heartednesse one towards another †, especially to their Ministers *.

Fourthly, looke to their Discipline, and you may see the Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Presbyters, Pastors, Teachers, first, teaching; secondly, exhorting; thirdly, ruling: and all by, first, preaching, secondly, writing, thirdly, private conference, fourthly, good examples: (No Churches unprovided of Presbyters, in the plurall number *.)

Thirdly, the Deacons providing for the poore, *Act. 6.3,—6.*

Fourthly, both sorts chosen by the Church, *Act. 6.3,5.*

Fifthly, Excommunications dispensed upon weighty occasions, and with great reverence, and with good successe.

Sixthly, Synods imposing no other but

* 1 Cor. 11.23,34. & 14.26, 48.

* Act. 4. 31. & 13. 1.—3. & 14.23.

* Act. 4. 32.

† Act. 4. 32.

* Gal. 4. 14,15.

* Act. 14. 23.

1 Cor. 5. 3,—5 with 2 Cor. 2.6,—8.

but neceſſary things, either in themſelves, or for the preſent uſe of the Church, *Act.*15.26.

This comely frame and order of the Church *Paul* beholding, joyed in it*. The Church was now called a Spouſe after Chriſt had taken our nature upon him. * Col.2.5

Come with me from Lebanon. (my Spouſe) with mee from Lebanon: looke from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the Lions dens, from the mountaines of the Leopards. *Verſe* 8.

Come with me from Lebanon.] It is a famous hill in the uttermoſt border of Iſrael northward: *Amana* a hill more northward on the weſt of *Syria*, looking into *Syria*, *Meſopotamia*, *Cilicia*, & all *Aſia* the leſs.

Hermon and Shenir.] Two names of the ſame hill, though happely given to divers parts, called alſo *Syrion* or *Sien**. * Deut. 3. 9. & 4.48.

The Lions dens and mountaines of the Leopards:] Jeruſalem * and the Temple in our Saviours time was made a den of theeves and robbers; but in the Apoſtles time, after the Aſcenſion, the Rulers grew more fierce and cruell, ſpilling the bloud of *Stephen*, and making havocke of * Mat.21. 13. Mar. 12. 17. Luk. 19. 46.

the Church: So then, in this verſe, Chriſt cals his Church of the Chriſtian Jewes,

Firſt, to behold from *Lebanon*, *Hermon*, *Amana*, the Church of the Gentiles gathered in *Antioch*, *Phenice*, *Cyrene*, *Cyprus*, *&c.*

Secondly, to come out from thoſe dens of ravenous perſecutors at Jeruſalem, and to prepare her ſelfe to dwell among the Gentiles. Upon the perſecution of *Stephen* the faithfull wandred into theſe parts, and preached the Goſpell partly to the Jewes, and after to the Gentiles alſo *; whereupon great numbers of the Gentiles beleeved †: Which when tydings thereof came to Jeruſalem, it was as the voyce of Chriſt calling the Church of Jeruſalem to ſend *Barnabas* to them, to ſee the Churches there, and to eſtabliſh them *. Afterwards when the Church of the Gentiles increaſed in number and grace, and the Jewes increaſed and grew up in blaſphemy and rage againſt the Goſpell, Chriſt called his Church at Jeruſalem to leave thoſe dens and mountaines of Lions and Leopards.

* Act. 11. 18.—20.
† Act. 11. 21.
* verſe 22—24.
Act. 22. 21 & 13. 46.

Verſe 9. *My ſiſter.*] This implieth that Chriſt now

now ſpeaketh not to the mother Church of the Jewes, but to a ſiſter Church, the Church of the Gentiles: ſuch a ſiſter as is alſo a ſpouſe, a true Church, now firſt called a ſiſter by reaſon of the acceſſion of the Church of the Gentiles.

Thou haſt raviſhed my heart, my ſiſter, my ſpouſe, thou haſt raviſhed my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chaine of thy neck. Thou haſt raviſhed my heart, thou haſt raviſhed my heart.] This implies that Chriſt was overcome exceedingly with the love of the Church: for ſuch repetitions imply, in the Hebrew Phraſe, a ſuperlative excellency.

This Church ſo affecting Chriſt was *Antioch*, the firſt Church of the Gentiles, ſeated betweene *Amana* and *Lebanon*: for *Barnabas*, ſeeing the grace of God upon them, was not a little glad of it, ſo that his ſpirit was ſtirred up to exhort them to continue and grow up *: yea, hee went out and ſought *Saul*, to bring him among them *; and they both ſpent a whole yeare there, and did winne much people, ſo that that Church was firſt called Chriſtian, they firſt had their huſbands name, the name of Chriſt firſt put upon

* Act. 11. 23, 24.

* verſe 25, 26.

* verſe 26

upon them, for the forwardneſſe of his love to them, and theirs to him.

With one of thy eyes.] The eyes of the Church are ſeverall, according as the Church may be ſeverally conſidered: for if the Church be conſidered as aſſembled together to publike duties, ſo the Miniſters of the Church are the eyes, amongſt whom they at *Antioch* excelled, as *Agabus* † and others; among whom the Lord was eſpecially delighted with *Barnabas* and *Saul*, who were ſent immediatly by the Spirit of Chriſt to enlighten all the neighbour Countries *: So they two, joyned in one office, were as one eye to enlighten all the parts. But if the Church be conſidered in the members apart, the eyes thereof are knowledge and faith †: In this Church faith excelled, reſting upon Chriſt alone without *Moſes* his Ceremonies, which the Jewes would have thruſt upon them *.

† Act. 11. 27, 28. & 13. 1.

* Act. 13. 2. to Act. 14. 27.

† Ioh. 8. 56.

* Act. 15. 1, 2, 3.

With one chaine of thy necke.] Chaines ſignified Lawes † binding as Chaines. Now the Church of *Antioch* ſending up *Paul* and *Barnabas* to Jeruſalem, about the contention which *Cerinthus* (as the ſtories thinke) and others raiſed at *Antioch*

†Cant. 1. 10.

tioch concerning the neceſſity of the Ceremoniall Lawes; * the Apoſtles or Elders made a Law or decree to abrogate the Ceremonies, and yet enjoyne ſome things, partly neceſſary in themſelves, as to avoid fornication; partly neceſſary to avoid the offences of the Jews, as to abſtaine from bloud, &c. This Law the Apoſtles and Elders hanged as a chaine upon the necke of the Church of *Antioch* and other Churches †: whence that Church received great conſolation*, and the other Churches eſtabliſhment and increaſe *.

* Act. 15. 2.

† Act. 15. 23.— 29. * Verſe 31

* Act. 16 4,5.

How faire is thy love my Siſter, my ſpouſe! how much better is thy love then wine! and the ſmell of thine oyntments then all ſpices!

Ver. 10.

How faire is thy love, my Siſter!] Siſter implies the ſame, and ſuch like gentile Churches, whoſe love is here ſet forth,

Firſt, by the faireneſſe of it.

Secondly, by the ſtrength, ſweetneſſe, cheerefulneſſe, implied in the preferring it above wine.

How faire, and ſtrong, and ſweet, and cheerefull was the love of the Church of *Antioch*; which aforehand prepared a contribution of their owne accord for the

* Act. 11 29, 30.

* 2 Cor. 8. 1. —5.

the poore Saints at Jeruſalem, even* *every man according to his ability*! The like or greater love ſeemed in the poore Churches of Macedonia*. A faire love for poore men to ſend relieſe to others: A ſtrong love for deepely poore to ſend rich liberality; yet more ſtrong and ſweet to pray the meſſengers with much intreaty to receive it, and a cheerefull love to doe all this in abundance of joy, and beyond the Apoſtles owne expectation.

*Phil. 4. 18.

This kinde of benevolence the Apoſtle calleth an odour of a ſweet ſmell*; it was ſweeter and better then wine. All this love ſhewed to the poore Saints Chriſt takes here as done to himſelfe, as he will alſo take it at the laſt day. The decayes of this firſt love ſhewes how great this love was at the firſt*.

Mat. 25. 35. —40.

† Rev. 2. 2. —4.

Ver. 10.

* Chap. 1. 3.

† Rom. 1. 8. Col. 2. 5. 1 Theſ. 1. 6, 7, 8.

The ſmell of thine oyntments then all ſpices.] Oyntments, are the graces of Gods Spirit*: Theſe gave a ſweet report farre and neare in thoſe Primitive Churches †.

Ver. 11.

Thy lips, O my ſpouſe, drop as the honeycombe: honey and milke are under thy tongue, and the ſmell of thy garments is like the ſmell of Lebanon.

Thy

Thy lips, O my Spouſe, drop as the honey-combe : honey and milke are under thy tongue.] This commendeth the Doctrine and Miniſtry of thoſe firſt Churches, in theſe foure reſpects :

Firſt, for the readineſſe and flowingneſſe of it ; it dropped forth of it ſelfe, it needed not to be preſt and conſtrained, as an honey-combe.

Secondly, for the ſweetneſſe of it, as the honey or the honey-combe.

Thirdly, for the wholeſomneſſe of it, as milke.

The ſmell of thy garments is like the ſmell of Lebanon.] Lebanon is full of ſweet trees of ſpices growing in it, which yeeld a fragrant ſmell even a farre off. Garments are,

Firſt, partly the wedding garments of Chriſts righteouſneſſe.

Secondly, partly the gracious carriage wherewith they cloathed themſelves in their outward converſation : They cloathed and decked themſelves with Chriſt, not onely to their Juſtification, but with his Spirit to their Sanctification ; which ſhewes forth it ſelfe in their humility, meekenes, patience, honeſty, faithfulneſs, diligence,

diligence, ſerviceableneſs of their outward carriage, ſo farre forth as that the Heathen ſmelled a ſweet ſavour in their whole courſe; * yea, even in *Trajans* time, when the ſmell of garments was not ſo ſtrong: yet what a ſweet teſtimony doth *Pliny* himſelfe (though a perſecutor) give of them, when hee ſaid, hee could finde no fault with them but that they roſe early, and went into the woods to ſing Hymnes to one *Jeſus*?

* Phil. 4. 8
1 Theſ. 4. 9. — 11.
1 Pet. 2. 12.
1 Ioh. 3. 22. 24.
Euſeb. lib. 3 *cap.* 30.
Plin. Epiſt. lib. 10. *Epiſt.* 97.

Uſe 1.

This firſt is to reforme their judgements who ſpeake of the Apoſtolicall Church as an infant and rude Church, whereas Chriſt, whoſe eyes were as a flame of fire, and who beſt knew it, commends it for perfection of beauty, and ſaith it was faire: So that if a Church were ſuch, Chriſt might imbrace it with both his armes.

This is the Church excellent for her Miniſters, excellent for common Chriſtians, which had pure eyes of knowledge and faith; ſo that by how much neerer any Church comes to this, by ſo much the fairer it is; and by how much any Church comes ſhort of it, by ſo much the fouler it is.

Secondly,

Secondly, this doth teach us that not abuses, but the toleration of them doth blemish a Church, and detract from the perfect beauty of it; for otherwise in the Primitive Churches were found Schisms, Heresies, a denying the Resurrection, uncharitable going to Law, Incest, love-feasts in the Lords Supper, strange tongues in the publicke worship; and yet because the Apostles stood out against these and reformed them, the Church still retaines her perfect beauty. In the Church of *Ephesus* there were false Apostles*, yet it was a Church; so it is, corruptions not cut off defile a Church: As we then desire the Church should be pure, leave we all our sinnes and corruptions which may any way blemish the beauty of the Church. Use 2. 1 Cor. 11. 13, 14. 19.—22. & 14. & 15. Chap. * Rev. 2. 3

Thirdly, this teaches us to be ready to extoll and acknowledge (as occasion serveth) other mens labours above our owne. Christ gathered a Church in his owne time which hee called, Faire*; but this Church gathered by his Apostles he calleth, All faire*. It grieveth him not to ascribe thousands to himselfe, and ten thousands to them; yea, he foretold it Use 3. * Cant. 4 1. * Cant. 4. 7.

Ioh.14.12 it, and promiſed it freely aforehand: How farre was he from a Spirit of envie and emulation, though indeed all their ſucceſſe was by his grace and bleſſing, as *Paul* ſaid, * *By the grace of God I am that I am?* The contrary Spirit of emulation hindereth Churches from taking that which is their owne from one another.

* 1 Cor. 15. 10.

Uſe 4. Fourthly, hence wee learne in what caſes one Church may ſtep from another, to wit,

First, when Chriſt leaveth a Church, and goeth away with us from it; *Come with me from Lebanon (my ſpouſe,) with me:* So when Chriſt leaves and forſakes a Church, wee may leave it and goe out with him.

Secondly, when a Church is become an univerſall ſpotted Leopard, and a cruell Lion, blaſpheming and perſecuting the Goſpell of Chriſt, as *

* Act. 19. 9. & 13. 50, 51.

Theſe things were found in *Rome*, from whence wee departed not in *England*, (bleſſed be the Lord) from whom the Separatiſts would have us to depart: But Chriſt ſtill vouchſafes to be with us, converting ſoules, feeding his lambes, hearing our prayers; We may alſo worſhip Chriſt

Christ in truth without feare of lawes, yea with acceptance. When Christ goes, let all his faithfull spouses goe with him; when there are dens of Lions, and men cannot keepe the profession of Christ, but fall into their mouthes, then it is time to goe: But are there these causes now? doth not Christ dwell here in the simplicity of his ordinances? As long as Christ is here in *England*, let us not goe away: but say, as *Peter* and *John*, *Lord, to whom shall wee goe? thou hast the words of eternall life.* As long as Christ is pleased to feed us, to drop milke and honey into our soules, let us not depart. * Ioh. 6. 68.

Fifthly, this may teach us how to knit the heart of Christ to us in ravishing affection, by cleaving to Christ with setled purpose *, by abounding in helpfulnesse to the Saints, by procuring and keeping faithfull shepherds, by burthening the Church not with many chains of lawes, but onely with few, and those necessary: all these are formerly mentioned in the Church of *Antioch*. As ever we desire to have the Lord Jesus Christ to love us, let us grow in knowledge, faith, and all saving graces of his Spirit, and hereby shew Use 5. * Act. 11. 23. Verse 9.

ſhew our love to him, and then we ſhall finde Chriſt raviſhed with our love.

Uſe 6. Verſe 10. Sixthly, this doth teach us what kind of love Chriſt acknowledgeth and embraceth; to wit, faire, ſtrong, ſweet, cheerefull, in an enlarging our ſelves to the reliefe of his poore Saints.

Uſe 7. Verſe 11. Seventhly, this doth teach Miniſters how to make their Miniſtry amiable to Chriſt, (not to preach once a moneth, or quarterly, by the preaching of the Law, but) to be full as the honey-combe dropping out of it ſelfe, to preach ſweet doctrine as honey, and wholeſome as milk, for the nouriſhment of Chriſts lambs.

The Paſtors and Miniſters of the Primitive Church did this without help of Univerſities; what a ſhame then is this for us to come ſhort of them in ſuch abundance of outward helpes and means? Would'ſt thou be a faithfull Miniſter? let thy doctrine drop as honey, preach willingly, freely, ſweetly, comfortably.

Uſe 8. Laſtly, this may learne and ſtirre up Chriſtians ſo to walke, and ſo to furniſh our ſelves with inward graces, and with outward commendable carriage, as may yeeld a ſweet ſavour and ſmel to God and

and man, that it may be like the ſmell of Lebanon, that men may ſmell a ſweet ſavour that come neere them: let our hearts be inwardly furniſhed with the graces of God as with ſweet oyntments; and our outward garments, our outward converſation ſo directed with honeſty, integrity, humility, meekeneſſe and love, &c. that our names be not diſhonoured, much leſſe God by our meanes. Caſt we aſide ſtinking drunkenneſſe, whoredome, malice, covetouſneſſe, &c. And thus doing, wee ſhall take away all offence; ſo doing, Chriſt ſhall looke at us as his faire ſpouſe, and ſay, *Thou art all faire my love*, verſe 7. Rom. 13. 13, 14.

* *A garden incloſed is my ſiſter, my ſpouſe.*] * Cant. 4. 12. to cha. 5. 2.

After the Church gathered by the Miniſtry of the Apoſtles, next followeth that under the ten perſecutions, which is here deſcribed,

Firſt, by her reſtraint, *verſe* 13.

Secondly, by her privacy, *verſe* 14.

Thirdly, by her fruitfulneſſe, refreſhing and watering others, *verſe* 15.

Fourthly, by her prayer in this eſtate: wherein conſider,

1. The Petitions; which are three,

First, for the ariſing of the winde, and coming into the South, *verſe* 16.

Secondly, for favourable blaſts of it, and that for this end, the flowing forth of her ſpices.

Thirdly, that Chriſt would come into his garden, and eat his pleaſant fruits, *verſe* 16.

2. Chriſts anſwer thereunto:

First, he commeth into his garden.

Secondly, he gathereth and enjoyeth the fruits of it.

Thirdly, he fils his Churches friends with a large meaſure of plenty, *Chap.* 5. 1.

Ver. 12. *A garden:*] The Church is here ſo called, as *verſe* 13. *an orchard*; or as it is in the originall, *a Paradiſe*, as if this were the garden of *Eden*. All the world is as a wilderneſſe, or at leaſt a wilde field; onely, the Church is Gods garden or orchard, in theſe three reſpects,

First, as the garden of Paradiſe was the habitation of *Adam* in the eſtate of innocency, ſo is the Church of all thoſe who are renewed into innocency.

Secondly, as in that garden were all manner of pleaſant and wholeſome hearbs

hearbs and trees growing, ſo in the Church are all manner of uſefull and ſavoury ſpirits.

Thirdly, as a man walketh in his garden to refreſh himſelfe; ſo doth Chriſt walke in his Church, yea and calleth his friends thither to walke with him.

A ſpring, a fountaine:] Not becauſe the Church is the fountaine of grace; but becauſe, Chriſt being in it, it is the ſpring or fountaine of the waters of life unto all *.

* Zach. 13. 1. Pſ. 87. 7.

A garden, ſpring, fountaine, incloſed, ſhut up, ſealed;] Not by a pale or wall of defence by Chriſtian Magiſtrates, but rather ſhut up by reſtraint; for the word ſignifies to incloſe or ſhut up, as with lockes and fetters.

Againe, the Church prayeth for the inlargement of the flowing of her ſpices, *verſe 16.* and therefore her preſent ſhutting up was uncomfortable to her.

The Church was then ſaid to be ſhut up,

Firſt, becauſe under the perſecutions it was ſhut up in priſons, and other places of puniſhment, as under lockes and fetters.

Secondly, becauſe the Church then aſſembled in private cloſe places, woods, dens, &c. and not in the open places of townes or cities.

Thirdly, becauſe it was ſhut up from free acceſſe of forrainers, men without; neither were the Emperours willing their Subjects ſhould repaire to them, nor the Church willing to admit all promiſcuouſly.

Ver. 13, 14. *Thy plants:*] That is, thy children or members, as an orchard of *Pomegranates*, *Camphire*, verſe 14. *Spikenard*, *Safron*, *Calamus*, *Cynamon*. The children of the Church are compared to theſe wholeſome and ſweet fruits, trees, hearbs, in a double reſpect.

Firſt, becauſe the vertues of theſe fruits and ſpices are eſpecially ſeen when they are cut and powred out, or beaten, or burned, or bruiſed: So it is with the graces of Gods children; they are chiefly exerciſed by the hard dealing of perſecutors.

Secondly, there was in the faithfull then perſecuted a reſemblance of the vertues of theſe fruits and ſpices.

Pomgranats. *Pomegranates* repreſſe and reſtraine the

the heat of Choler, the malignity of fevers, the looſeneſſe of the belly; they alſo comfort the ſtomacke and bowels, and prevent faintings and ſwoonings.

Camphire

Camphire with his ſweetneſſe of ſmell delighteth and ſtrengthneth the Spirits, cheereth up the minde, helpes the ſtone, reſtraines ulcers.

Spikenard

Spikenard ſtayeth diſtillations from the head, ſtrengthneth the ſtomacke, digeſteth cold humours, helpeth conception.

Safron.

Safron thinneth flegme, helpes lethargies, coughs, and pluriſies, furthereth digeſtion, comforteth the heart, redreſſes the rottenneſſe of the other parts, which alſo are ſtrengthned.

Calamus.

Calamus helpes the paſſages of the urine, and the faults of the reines, helpeth alſo the wombe and conception.

Cynamon

Cynamon ſtrengthneth and cheereth the ſpirits and minde, dryeth up rotten matter, helpeth againſt poyſon, warmeth and ſtrengthneth the ſtomacke to digeſtion.

Frankincenſe.

Frankincenſe reſtraineth and helpeth ulcers, gouts, fluxes of bloud, cleanſeth and glueth up wounds and ulcers.

Myrrh. *Myrrh* refresheth the braine, drieth up superfluous humors, helpeth straightnesse of breath, restraineth ulcers and itchinesse, filleth ulcers and wounds with flesh.

Aloes. *Fernelius de method. medend. lib. 4. cap. 7,9, 19,21,22, 26,27. lib. 6. cap. 12, 13,14,15.* *Aloes* cleanse tough flegme and choller, drie up raw and cold humours, preserve the rest from putrefying, open obstructions, strengthen the stomacke strongly.

Sutable to the vertues of these fruits and spices, persecution bred and stirred up in the faithfull graces of like efficacy, to restraine heats of emulation, contention, ambition, to represse ulcers of malignity and dis-affection one to another, to heale the coldnesse, hypocrisie, and rottennesse of their spirits; to stay distillations of cold raw matters, dropping from the head Bishops of Rome; as also to strengthen appetite to the word, to comfort the faint hearted, to knit the members together.

Ver. 15. *A fountaine of gardens, &c.*] For the Church, pouring out her confessions and martyrdomes for the truth, propagated and watered many Churches; for, *sanguis martyrum* was *semen Ecclesiæ*, *a Well of living*

Joh. 4. 10.

living waters. The Church was not then dryed up, but plentifully ſtored with the graces of the ſpirit, *Streames from Lebanon:* The Churches were ſtored with ſuch graces of the Spirit, as ſtreamed and iſſued out from the mountains of Iſrael, the writings of the Prophets and Apoſtles.

Awake, or ariſe, O Northwind, &c.] The Churches deſire that a winde might ariſe in the North, and come into the South: to wit, that *Conſtantine*, borne in *Yorke*, would come into the ſoutherne parts, and take the Empire upon him, (*and blow upon my garden*) driving away the blaſts of Eaſterly perſecutions, and breath favourably and wholeſomly upon the Church, cooling the tempeſtuous heats of the perſecutions which the Church endured. The Church prayeth not the South to come, but the North to come into the South, elſe *Ver. 16.*

Firſt, the word *blow*, if it had reference to both windes, ſhould have beene of the plurall number.

Secondly, Northwinde and Southwinde blowing together, would interrupt and croſſe one another by their contrariety.

Ver 16. *That the ſpices thereof may flow forth:*] That the Goſpell and ordinances of Chriſt and the graces of his children, which were there reſtrained from their free manifeſtation by the perſecutions, might have free paſſage.

Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat of his pleaſants fruits.] Let *Conſtantine* come to them, and partake of the benefits of the Churches ſerviceable graces to God and him.

THE

THE CANTICLES, OR SONG OF SONGS opened and explained.

The Text.

CHAP. 5.

I *Am come into my garden, my ſiſter, my ſpouſe, I have gathered my Myrrhe with my ſpice, I have eaten my honey-combe with my honey, I have drunke my wine with my milke: eate, O friends, drinke, yea drinke abundantly, O beloved.*

2 *I ſleepe, but my heart waketh, it is the voyce of my beloved that knocketh, ſaying, Open to mee my ſiſter, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my lockes with the drops of the night.*

3 *I have put off my coat, how ſhall I put it on? I have waſhed my feet, how ſhall I defile them?*

4 *My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the doore, and my bowels were moved for him.*

5 *I roſe up to open to my beloved, and my hands dropped*

dropped with Myrrhe, and my fingers with ſweet ſmelling Myrrhe, upon the handles of the locke.

6 I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had withdrawne himſelfe, and was gone: my ſoule failed when hee ſpake: I ſought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no anſwer.

7 The watchmen that went about the city found me, they ſmote me, they wounded me, the keepers of the wals tooke away my vaile from me.

8 I charge you, O daughters of Jeruſalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him, that I am ſicke of love.

9 What is thy beloved more then another beloved, O thou faireſt among women? What is thy beloved more then another beloved, that thou doſt ſo charge us?

10 My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefeſt among ten thouſand.

11 His head is as the moſt fine gold, his lockes are buſhie and blacke as a Raven.

12 His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of water, waſhed with milke, and fitly ſet.

13 His cheekes are as a bed of ſpices, as ſweet flowers: his lips like lillies, dropping ſweet ſmelling Myrrhe.

14 His hands are as gold rings ſet with the Beril: his belly is as bright Ivorie overlaid with Saphires.

15 His legs are as pillars of marble, ſet upon ſockets of fine gold, his countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the Cedars.

16 His mouth is moſt ſweet, yea, he is altogether

ther lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jeruſalem.

The Explanation.

Cant. 5. verſe 1. *I am come into my garden, my ſiſter, my ſpouſe, I have gathered my Myrrhe with my ſpice, I have eaten my honeycombe with my honey, I have drunke my wine with my milke: eate, O friends, drinke, yea drinke abundantly, O beloved.*]

Conſtantine came into the Church, enjoyed the fellowſhip of it, did partake in all the parts of it, yea and richly endowed it; ſo that the Church and all her friends did eat and drinke, yea and did drinke abundantly of wealth, preferments, &c. whence it was that ſhee fell into a deepe ſleepe. Chap. 5. verſe 1. Cha. 4. 12.

Firſt, this ſerves to ſtirre us up to thankefulneſſe and fruitfulneſſe to God, who hath planted us not in the wilderneſſe of the world, but in the garden of his Church. If wee now tranſgreſſe as *Adam* did, eating of the forbidden fruits, * God will take his garden from us, and caſt us out of it. Uſe 1. * Gen. 3. 6 11, 12, 24 & 2. 17.

Secondly,

Use 2. Secondly, this lets us see, all the goodly situations of the earth are but dunghils and desarts, in comparison of the Church; the Church is a garden, and in it are fountaines of living waters for every thirsty soule.

Use 3. Thirdly, though the Church be sometimes in open view of all, as a City set
Mat. 5. 14. on a hill; yet it is sometimes also otherwise, inclosed, shut up, sealed.

Use 4. Fourthly, when the Church is shut up in corners and conventicles, the members of it hatch not treasons, schismes, factions, but still remaineth as a garden, orchard, fountaine, yeelding sweet waters, savoury and wholesome fruits.

Use 5. Fifthly, see the wonderfull use of afflictions and persecutions to the Church; what savoury, and wholesome and precious graces are thereby exercised; yea, how mightily doth the Church then spread when it is most restrained?

Use 6. Sixthly, see then what the weapons of the Church were against their persecutors; not daggers, dags, powder, pistols, rebellions, treasons, &c. but prayers for more seasonable times.

Use 7. Seventhly, we are to be stirred up to pray,

pray, that God would now ſtirre up a wholeſome Northwinde, to blow favourably upon the Churches beyond the ſeas, and ſtrongly againſt their enemies.

Eighthly, this may teach us whileſt we enjoy at home theſe faire blaſts, not to ſtreame forth the unſavoury corruptions of our owne ſpirits, but the ſweet graces of God; elſe wee abuſe theſe ſweet opportunities we doe enjoy. Uſe 8.

Laſtly, it is a time of much rejoycing when God ſtirreth up Kings and Princes to come into the fellowſhip of the Church, and to partake of Gods ordinances in the ſame. Uſe 9.

I ſleepe, but my heart waketh, it is the voyce of my beloved that knocketh, ſaying, &c.] Cant. 5. ver. 2. to chap. 6. ver. 4.

Now followeth the deſcription of the eſtate of the Church from *Conſtantines* time to the time of reſtoring of the Goſpell, and reforming of the Church by the Miniſtery of *Luther*, and other late Divines.

After that *Conſtantine* had largely endowed the Church with peace, and wealth, and honour; it fell into an eſtate of

of carnall ſecurity; which carnall ſecurity is deſcribed,

Firſt, by a compariſon, reſembling it to ſleepe; which ſleepe of hers is amplified by the divers conditions, yet *my heart waketh.*

Secondly, by the carriage of Chriſt towards her in this her ſleepe; where obſerve,

1. The meanes hee uſeth to awake and ſtirre her up: which were,

Firſt, calling to her and knocking, as *verſe* 2.

Secondly, putting in his hand by the hole of the doore, *verſe* 4.

2. The ſucceſſe of thoſe meanes, or the reſpect ſhe gave to them, or the uſe ſhe made of them; which was double,

Firſt, his calling and knocking ſhee neglecteth wholly, upon very ſlight pretences and excuſes, *verſe* 3.

Secondly, his putting in his hand by the hole of the doore,

1. She is affected with it, *My bowels were moved for him*, verſe 4.

2. She upon it ſought him: which is further ſet forth,

Firſt, By the degrees of her ſeeking him: 1. She

1. She aroſe to open to him, *verſe* 5.

2. Her hands and fingers dropped Myrrhe upon the handles of the locke, *verſe* 5.

3. She opened to her beloved, *ver.6.*

Secondly, by the fruits or ſucceſſe of her ſeeking, where is interpreted the fruit or ſucceſſe of theſe two degrees of her ſeeking, in regard,

1. Of Chriſt, *hee was gone, hee had withdrawne himſelfe*, &c. *verſe 6.*

2. Of the watchmen, of whom ſhe asketh not for her beloved; but they finding her ſeeking Chriſt, they

Firſt, ſmote her.

Secondly, wounded her.

Thirdly, tooke away her vaile from her, *verſe 7.*

Fourthly, ſhe, not diſcouraged with this bad dealing and hard uſage of the watchmen, added a fourth degree in her ſeeking of Chriſt; ſhee chargeth the daughters of Jeruſalem to move Chriſt for her, *verſe* 8. The ſucceſſe or fruit whereof is added, for upon this charge,

1. The daughters of Jeruſalem are ſtirred and occaſioned to enquire of her, who Chriſt is, *verſe 9.*

2. She

2. She by their enquiry is occaſioned to deſcribe him,

Firſt, by his colours, *verſe* 10.

Secondly, by his eminency, *verſe* 10.

Thirdly, by his ſeverall members and parts, *verſe* 11,—16.

Fourthly, by his amiableneſſe, *verſe* 16.

3. The daughters of Jeruſalem by this her deſcription of him, are ſtirred up to affect him, and to promiſe their fellowſhip in ſeeking of him with her, *Chap.6.1.*

Verſe 2. *I ſleepe:*] The Church ſurfeiting with abundance of proſperity in *Conſtantines* time, neglected the purity and power both of doctrine and worſhip, and received corruptions; of which were prayers to Saints, building of Temples to them, Superſtitious regard of their reliques, Images, and their worſhip, Ceremonies annexed to their ſacraments, choyce of meats, affecting and applauding Monkiſh life, Purgatory, &c.

My heart waketh:] The Church was ſtill awake,

Firſt, to hearty devotion, according to their knowledge, and beyond it.

Secondly,

Secondly, to discerne some such grosse heresies as quenched the heart and life of Christianity; as the impiety of *Arius*, denying the God-head of Christ; of *Macedonius* and *Eunemius*, denying the person of the holy Ghost; of *Nesterius*, dividing the persons in Christ; of *Eutiches*, confounding their natures: other straw and stubble built upon the foundation they neglected.

It is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open.] Christ used good meanes to awaken his spouse, and to raise her up from this carnall security.

First, he calleth to her in the voice of sundry good Divines, who complained of the intolerable burthen of humane inventions, wherewith the common Christians were defiled and dabled, as Christ here complaines: His locks & haire were full of the drops of the night; drops with coldnesse of Religion and darknesse of ignorance ingendred. *August. ep. 119.*

Secondly, he knocked by the raps and blowes which *Constantius*, *Valens*, and *Julian* gave to the Church; the two former persecuting the orthodox Bishops and Ministers and other Christians, in favour of the *Arians*; and *Julian* making flat A-

poſtacy from the Church, and ſubtlely ſupplanting the nurſing of Religion.

Verſe 3. *I put off my coat, how ſhall I put it on? I have waſhed my feet, how ſhall I defile them?*

I have put off my coat.] Thus upon ſleight pretence the Church refuſeth to open to Chriſt: ſhe pretends, Religion & the worſhip of God would appeare too naked, if it were not clothed with goodly & comely humane inventions; how then ſhould ſhe in ſo naked a manner open to Chriſt? Humane inventions do not clothe Religion, or the Church profeſſing it with any comely ornaments; but, as it were with warme blankets, lap her and lull her aſleep in the bed of perfunctorie worſhip and carnall ſecurity.

I do not here conceive that the Church acknowledgeth ſhe hath caſt off her garments of Chriſts righteouſneſſe; for then how ſhould ſhee remaine the ſpouſe of Chriſt? yea, how then ſhould her heart have beene otherwiſe then aſleepe too? but onely ſhee pleadeth ſhee ſhould appeare too naked if ſhee ſhould open to Chriſt, if ſhee ſhould worſhip him in the ſimplicity and nakedneſſe of his ſimple ordinances. *I*

I haue waſhed my feet:] Not with the laver of regeneration, for that would have beene no impediment, but a furtherance to the pure worſhip of God; but ſhee had waſhed her feet, ſhee had freed and cleanſed her converſation from defilements of ſecular affaires: ſhee had taken up a devout regard of virginitie, or hermitiſh or monkiſh ſolitary retiredneſs; ſhee being cleanſed and waſhed in theſe devices, cannot betake herſelfe to worſhip the Lord in his ſimple ordinances, and in the waies of her calling, without ſome defilement: Thus marriage and worldly buſineſſe (though both allowed by God, yet) ſeeme a defilement, in compariſon of more ſtrict ſuperſtitious devotion.

My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him. *Verſe 4.*

My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the doore;] Or, *My beloved put downe his hand by the hole of the doore.*] Either of which imply, that Chriſt did at firſt uſe meanes for himſelfe to open the doore, when ſhee would not; attempting to remove the impediments which hinder him from enjoying his ſpouſe: Firſt, *put his*

hand by the hole of the doore, when he stirred up Christian Emperours, such as *Martianus*, and both the *Theodosii*, to call Synods, and to command the Fathers assembled, to give all diligence to roote out all heresies, and depravations of doctrine and worship, that the pure and holy faith might shine forth.

How easily might the Church, upon such encouragements, have broken the barres and bolts of superstition crept into the worship of God, whereby Christ was debarred from drawing neer to them? The Bishops assembled in those Councels of that time, condemned those gross heresies which blasphemed the doctrine of the Trinity; but how deeply did they neglect to redresse all other enormities and corruptions? Besides, Christ is said to put in his hand by the hole of the door, when he puts his spirit, which is the power & finger of God*, into the hearts of his people, whereby they are enlightened to know him better, and stirre up men honestly to seek after him. So Christ enlightned and stirred up *Leo Esauricus*, *Constantines* sonne, and *Leo Copronimus*, to bend their best endevours to roote out Idolatry, and

* Mat. 12. 28. with Luke 11. 20.

to

to remove Images, which were one of the chiefeſt abuſes in Gods worſhip.

My bowels were moved for him.] Theſe good Princes, and other Chriſtians at that time were ſtrongly and inwardly affected to the purity of Gods worſhip, in which alone Chriſt is found.

I roſe up to open to my beloved, and my hands dropped with myrrhe, and my fingers with ſweet ſwelling myrrh, upon the handles of the locke. Verſe 5.

I roſe up to open to my beloved.] The Church under theſe good Emperours roſe up out of the blankets of theſe humane inventions wherewith ſhee was covered, in a bed of ſleeping devotion, and endeavoured to reſtore openly the ſimplicity of Gods worſhip, rejecting Images and Idolatry.

My hands dropped with myrrhe, and my fingers with ſweet ſwelling myrrhe, upon the handles of the lock.] The endeavours of the Church were ſweet & delectable and acceptable to Chriſt, and ſavoury to the people, to preſerve them, as myrrhe, from further perſecution, when *Conſtantine* the ſonne of *Leo Iſauricus*, called the ſeventh *Conſtantinopolitan* Councell, and there truly

ly and ſolemnly convinced and condemned the worſhip of Images: As alſo when *Charles* the Great did the like ſome fortie yeares after, at a Synod in *Frankford*.

Verſe 6. *I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had withdrawne himſelfe, and was gone: my ſoule failed when he ſpake: I ſought him, but I could not finde him: I called him, but he gave me no anſwer.*

I opened to my beloved.] This attempt of the Church in executing in ſome places the decrees of theſe ſynods was an opening of the doore to Chriſt: Images and Idolatrie being ſhut forth, there is a doore open for Chriſt to enter.

But my beloved had withdrawn himſelfe, and was gone.] Chriſt did not delight to reveale himſelfe in their publike aſſemblies, though Images were in ſome places well removed, both becauſe thoſe decrees for removing of Images were not generally received and executed, through the comming in of the Biſhop of *Rome*; and becauſe the worſhip of God was ſtill full of heatheniſh and Jewiſh ſuperſtitions, which Chriſt tooke no pleaſure in.

My ſoule failed when he ſpake:] The faithfull in thoſe times were aſſembled with

with feare and griefe, to conſider how Chriſt now ſpeaketh to them afarre off, comes not neer to their hearts and conſciences; ſo that now, though they uſed ſuch meanes to finde him as the times afforded, yet Chriſt did take no pleaſure in thoſe meanes, in thoſe worſhips, nor, to their ſenſe, in thoſe that uſed them.

The watchmen that went about the Citie found me, they ſmote me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walles took away my vaile from me. *Verſe 7.*

The watchmen that went about the Citie found me:] Theſe watchmen are the Biſhops and Miniſters of that time; as alſo the *keepers of the wals* may well bee the Magiſtrates; for civill government is a wall of defence to the Church of God.

They found me,] And yet the Church enquireth not of them, as ſhee had done before of other watchmen, * *Have you not ſeen him whom my ſoule loves?* for ſhe knew theſe watchmen were of another ſpirit, rather wolves in ſheeps cloathing, and more ready to beat her from Chriſt, then to bring her to Chriſt. They ſmote me with cenſures of excommunications, as *Gregorie* the third Pope of *Rome* did *Leo Iſaurus* * Chap. 3.3.

ricus for his endeavours. Afterwards, when ſundry Chriſtians, having intelligence that the Biſhops and Doctors were aſſembled in a Temple at *Byzantium*, to give ſentence for reſtoring of Images, in the daies of the Empreſſe *Irene*, came upon them, and forced them with weapons to leave off ſuch decrees; theſe people were afterwards diſ-armed and baniſhed into ſundry Iſlands. Thus were the faithfull ſmitten with the cenſures of Excommunication by the watchmen of the Citie; of baniſhment by the keepers of the walls.

They wounded me,] With the Canons of the ſecond Councell of *Nice*; whither that Councell, aſſembled in the Temple of *Byzantium*, & ſcattered by the people, was afterwards tranſlated by the counſell of the Biſhops of *Rome*. In this Councell Images were againe reſtored, to the great griefe of the godly, yea to the wounding of their hearts. The ſentence of a generall Councell in the behalfe of any error is no ſmall wound to the whole Church.

They tooke away my vaile from me,] when they forced the Biſhops of *Rhodes*, *Nice*, *Neo-Ceſarea*, *Hierapolis*, and others to

to recantation, who before had worthily oppoſed Images. To bring men to open recantation, to lay open their nakedneſſe, eſpecially when they recant from the trueth, is to take away the vaile.

I charge you, O daughters of Jeruſalem, if ye finde my beloved, that ye tell him that I am ſicke of love. Verſe 8.

I charge you, O daughters of Jeruſalem.] The Church, finding her ſelfe ſo hardly dealt with by the Miniſters and Magiſtrates, would not give over her ſearch after Chriſt; yet now ſeeketh him in the fellowſhip of private Chriſtians, and ſtirreth them up to pray for her.

Tell him I am ſicke of love.] That is, in your prayers acknowledge that the Church is ready to faile and periſh for want of his preſence and fellowſhip in his publike ordinances.

What is thy beloved more then another beloved, O thou faireſt among women? &c.] Verſe 9.

The Chriſtians, the daughters of *Jeruſalem*, from this day forward, to the daies of *Petrus Waldus* (of whom the *Waldenſes* tooke their name) were very ignorant of Chriſt, and therefore they ask who hee was,

was, and wherein better then another: But in ſtead of him they magnified the Church; *Holy mother Church* was all in all with them: Her they acknowledged to be faireſt among women, though they ſee nothing in Chriſt better then in another.

Ver. 10. *My beloved is white and ruddy, &c.*] Thus *Petrus Waldus*, a Citizen of *Lions*, opened Chriſt to the daughters of *Jeruſalem*, to the children of the Church, ſetting before them the white innocency of true holineſſe in him, and the ruddy ſcarlet dye of his death. The righteouſneſſe and death of Chriſt plainly, yet powerfully, opened by him, brought many to behold Chriſt, and to profeſſe him; who (when by perſecution ſtirred up againſt them by the Biſhop of *Rome* they were diſperſed into many places) multiplied exceedingly; and being then called *Albingenſes*, in many battels fought againſt the ſouldiers which Pope *Innocent* the third had ſent againſt them, under conduct of *Simon Mounteford*, and others ſigned with the croſſe: in many of which the *Albingenſes* prevailed, helped by *Reymund* Earle of *Thelus*, and *Peter* King of *Aragon*; though after-

afterwards they were overcome and ſcattered further into many places of Chriſtendome. So in regard of theſe troupes of many thouſands, Chriſt is here called the *ſtandard-bearer*, as the word ſignifieth, or *the choice of ten thouſand.* Again, at that time Chriſt may be ſaid to be white and ruddy in regard of his members, who were then white with innocency of life, yet ruddy, enduring perſecution.

His head is as the moſt fine gold, his locks are buſhie, and black as a raven. *Ver.* 11.

His head is as the moſt fine gold.] Chriſt comes now to be deſcribed in his members more particularly: This head of gold Chriſt ſhewed on the earth in the perſon of *Frederick*, the ſecond Emperour of *Rome*, a Prince of much purity and worth, as an head of the Church of fine gold: He contended with many Popes about the headſhip of the Church, advanced the headſhip of Chriſt and of himſelfe, his Vice-gerents, above he counterfeit head of the Popes Supremacy. He wraſtled for Chriſt againſt them with much difficulty, yet prevailed; ſo that even in the popiſh ſchools his election of God was agreed and condeſcended unto by ſundry.

His

His locks are buſhie, or *curled, and black as a raven.*] Curled black haire is a ſigne of heat and courage, and wit in him that it groweth upon: Such was the Emperour himſelfe, & ſuch were the common Chriſtians of that age that did depend upon their Emperour; they ſtuck cloſe to him: learned men with wit, more then former ages had yeelded, and ſouldiers with courage maintained his perſon and cauſe.

Ver. 12. *His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of water, waſhed with milke, and fitly ſet.*]

Doves, diving in rivers of waters, dive their bellies deepe into the waters; ſo that their eyes looke cloſe and narrowly upon it.

Firſt, the *eyes* are here ſet forth by their care of the Church; he is not ſo farre off removed from it, that he had need of the Pope to be his viſible Vicar to looke to it.

Secondly, by their milde innocency, implied, in that they are *doves eyes* and *waſhed with milke*; whereas the Popes eyes were as hawkes eyes, looking eagerly after the prey.

Thirdly, by their fit ſtanding, ſoe as they may well looke to the whole bodie; whereas

whereas the Popes eyes cannot possibly watch to looke well to the estate of the Church so far off him.

To this purpose tended the doctrine of the faithfull Divines in the following age, such as *Michael Cesenus*, *Petrus de Carbania*, *Johannes de Poliaco*, and such as followed them.

His cheekes are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers: his lips like lillies, dropping sweet smelling myrrhe. *Ver.* 13.

His cheeks are as a bed of spices.]

Cheekes implie the outward face of the faithfull Church, for the cheekes are a place most conspicuous, which shewes that the faithfull of those times were as beds of spices and sweete flowers, to wit, not gathered into any set garden, as afterward in *Luthers* time,* but scattered here and there, yet of sweet and precious savour in the nostrils of Christ: yea one *Nicholaus de Bibrath*, living about that time, compareth faith and pietie in the Church to spice rare and deare. *Cha.6.2.

His lips like lillies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh.] The doctrine of the Church at those times was such as, like *myrrhe*, served to preserve the faithfull from putrefaction,

trefaction, according to that, * *That which ye have already, hold faſt till I come.* In the Primitive Apoſtolique Church her lips dropped like an hony-combe, being of ſtrong ſweet reliſh to delight and nouriſh to full growth: * But the lips of this Church drop rather myrrhe then hony; they rather preſerved ſome trueth of grace, then yeelded any abundant nouriſhment to procure increaſe to the Church.

* Rev. 2. 25.

* Can. 4. 11.

Ver. 14. *His hands are as gold rings ſet with the Berill: his belly is as bright Ivory overlaid with Saphires.*

His hands are as gold rings ſet with the Berill:] *Hands* are inſtuments of action; their being ſet with *gold rings* implyeth their purity and dignitie: The *Berill* cleereth moiſture and dimme ſight: *Franciſcus Rudis, de Goma. libr.* 2. *cap.* 8. All theſe ſhew that the Miniſtry of the Goſpell ſhould be then more powerfull; and indeed God, about that time, *Anno* 1300. ſtirred up *Dantes, Marcillius, Potavinus, Ocham, Gregorius Ariminenſis, Petrarchus, Wickliffe*, and many moe, whoſe Miniſtry brought on ſo many, that ſome have counted it the firſt reſurrection; yea, the Magiſtrates of that time, *Ludovicus Bavarus*

rus the Emperour, *Philip* of *France*, *Edward* the third of *England*, ſtood out in many things againſt the Pope, as thoſe whoſe hands had got more ſtrength, and better felt their owne worth, and whoſe eies were cleered to ſee more light then their predeceſſours.

His belly as bright Ivory overlaid with Saphires.] The belly is an hidden part of the body, yet ſuch from which the reſt is nouriſhed; which fitly reſembleth the Sacraments here, as alſo *ch.*7.2. which being hid from thoſe that are without, yet nouriſh the whole body, as an heap of wheat. The doctrine of the Sacraments, and the pure adminiſtration of the ſame, was at this time reſtored by *John Wickliffe*, and embraced by his followers, though condemned in the Councell of *Conſtance*. Theſe Sacraments are ſaid to be overlaid with *Saphires*, whoſe property is to ſtrengthen and cheriſh the principall ſolid parts,* becauſe of the efficacy of the Sacraments truely taught and adminiſtred, to ſtrengthen and quicken Gods graces in us.

* Rucus Deginus l.1. cap.2.

His legs are as pillars of marble, ſet upon ſockets of fine gold: his countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the Cedars *Ver.* 15.

His

His legs are as pillars of marble, ſet upon ſockets of fine gold.] Theſe two legs ſeem to be *John Hus*, and *Jerome* of *Prague*, who ſtood conſtantly in defence of the trueth, even unto death, being eſtabliſhed in the trueth and grace of God, as it were *pillars of marble, ſet upon ſockets of fine gold.*

His countenance is as Lebanon.]

The faithfull grew ſo plentifully in *Bohemia*, that they ſeemed even to the adverſarie to be like a thick wood (as many and firme) which they were not able to hew downe; and therefore they were forced, in the Councell of *Conſtance*, to allow them the uſe of the cup in the Lords Supper, becauſe they could not by ſtrong hand keep them from it.

Excellent as the Cedars.] The Cedar is a tree eminent for taleneſſe, and ſoundneſſe or durablneſſe: ſuch was then the face and countenance of the Church, obſerved to grow up in conſpicuous eminencie, and in ſoundneſſe of love to the trueth, that the Popiſh teachers were not able to corrupt them any longer with their ſeducements.

Ver. 16. *His mouth is moſt ſweet, yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and*

and this is my friend, O daughters of Jeruſalem.

His mouth is moſt ſweet.] The doctrine of the Goſpell was taught more and more ſavourly by *Johannes Rocheſana*, and other Miniſters in *Bohemia*.

He is altogether lovely, or *deſireable.*] Chriſt then began againe ſo to diſpenſe himſelfe to his Church, in giving them the faith and ſenſe of his goodneſſe, that now they ſaw or found nothing in Chriſt, or in the profeſſion of his name, but what was wholly deſirable. The rebukes of Chriſt began now to ſeeme greater riches, then the treaſures of *Egypt* or *Babylon* in ſome former ages: they that ſaw the trueth were often brought to yeeld and recant; but theſe ſaw nothing to bee more deſired then Chriſt. Beſides, hee is now called holy and deſirable, becauſe ſo many ſo generally were ſtirred up to deſire and ſeeke reformation. The Regions were white and ready to the harveſt, elſe *Luther* had not found ſuch good ſucceſſe in his Miniſtry. Heb.11. 26.

This is my beloved, and this is my friend.] The doctrine of certainty of our adop-

tion, Iuſtification, Salvation, began now more plainly to be diſcerned and acknowledged: Chriſt is not onely faire and deſireable in himſelfe; but then the Church could more boldly ſay, *This is my beloved, this is my friend.*

THE

THE CANTICLES, OR SONG OF SONGS opened and explained.

The Text.

CHAP. 6.

WHither is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest among women? whither is thy beloved turned aside? that we way ſeeke him with thee.

2 *My beloved is gone downe into his garden, to the beds of ſpices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies.*

3 *I am my beloveds, and my beloved is mine: he feedeth among the lilies.*

4 *Thou art beautifull, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jeruſalem, terrible as an armie with banners.*

5 *Turne away thine eyes from mee, for they have overcome me: thy haire is as a flock of goats that appeare from Gilead.*

6 *Thy teeth are as a flocke of ſheepe which goe*

tion, Iuſtification, Salvation, began now more plainly to be diſcerned and acknowledged: Chriſt is not onely faire and deſireable in himſelfe; but then the Church could more boldly ſay, *This is my beloved, this is my friend.*

THE

THE CANTICLES, OR SONG OF SONGS opened and explained.

The Text.

CHAP. 6.

WHither is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest among women? whither is thy beloved turned aside? that we way seeke him with thee.

2 My beloved is gone downe into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies.

3 I am my beloveds, and my beloved is mine: he feedeth among the lilies.

4 Thou art beautifull, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an armie with banners.

5 Turne away thine eyes from mee, for they have overcome me: thy haire is as a flock of goats that appeare from Gilead.

6 Thy teeth are as a flocke of sheepe which goe

up from the washing, whereof every one beareth twinnes, and there is not one barren among them.

7 *As a peece of pomegranate are thy temples within thy lockes.*

8 *There are threescore Queenes, and fourscore Concubines, and Virgins without number.*

9 *My dove, my undefiled is but one; shee is the onely one of her Mother, shee is the choice one of her that bare her: The daughters saw her, and blessed her; yea, the Queenes, and the Concubines, and they praised her.*

10 *Who is shee that looketh forth as the morning, faire as the moone, cleare as the sunne, and terrible as an army with banners?*

11 *I went downe into the garden of nuts to see the fruits of the valley, and to see whether the Vine flourished, and the pomegranats budded.*

12 *Or ever I was aware, my soule made mee like the chariots of Aminadab.*

13 *Returne, returne, O Shulamite; returne, returne, that we may looke upon thee: what will you see in the Shulamite? as it were the company of two armies.*

THE

THE EXPLANATION.

Cant. 6. 1. *Whither is thy beloved gone? O thou faireſt among women, whither is thy beloved turned aſide? that we may ſeeke him with thee.*]

THe Churches affectionate deſcribing and praiſing Chriſt, ſtirred up many then to looke after Religion and Reformation. Chap. 6. verſe 1.

Firſt, we may here ſee the danger of ſurfetting the Church with wealth and pleaſures and honour. *Conſtantine* had in the firſt verſe enebriated the Church with wealth and honour, and hereupon the Church falleth into a long ſleepe, which ſhee ſhook not wholly off for many ages. No wonder then of that ſpeech heard from heaven, *Hodiè venenum concidit in Eccleſiam*: Now is poyſon powred or fallen into the Church. Uſe 1.

Secondly, this may let as ſee that they have not the ſpirit of the Church of Chriſt, that when they heare many voices in Religion carried ſundry waies, know not whom to follow, cannot diſcerne which Uſe 2.

up from the waſhing, whereof every one beareth twinnes, and there is not one barren among them.

7 *As a peece of pomegranate are thy temples within thy lockes.*

8 *There are threeſcore Queenes, and fourſcore Concubines, and Virgins without number.*

9 *My dove, my undefiled is but one; ſhee is the onely one of her Mother, ſhee is the choice one of her that bare her: The daughters ſaw her, and bleſſed her; yea, the Queenes, and the Concubines, and they praiſed her.*

10 *Who is ſhee that looketh forth as the morning, faire as the moone, cleare as the ſunne, and terrible as an army with banners?*

11 *I went downe into the garden of nuts to ſee the fruits of the valley, and to ſee whether the Vine flouriſhed, and the pomegranats budded.*

12 *Or ever I was aware, my ſoule made mee like the chariots of Aminadab.*

13 *Returne, returne, O Shulamite; returne, returne, that we may looke upon thee: what will you ſee in the Shulamite? as it were the company of two armies.*

THE

THE EXPLANATION.

Cant. 6. 1. *Whither is thy beloved gone? O thou faireſt among women, whither is thy beloved turned aſide? that we may ſeeke him with thee.*]

THe Churches affectionate deſcribing and praiſing Chriſt, ſtirred up many then to looke after Religion and Reformation. Chap. 6. verſe 1.

Firſt, we may here ſee the danger of ſurfetting the Church with wealth and pleaſures and honour. *Conſtantine* had in the firſt verſe enebriated the Church with wealth and honour, and hereupon the Church falleth into a long ſleepe, which ſhee ſhook not wholly off for many ages. No wonder then of that ſpeech heard from heaven, *Hodiè venenum concidit in Eccleſiam*: Now is poyſon powred or fallen into the Church. Uſe 1.

Secondly, this may let as ſee that they have not the ſpirit of the Church of Chriſt, that when they heare many voices in Religion carried ſundry waies, know not whom to follow, cannot diſcerne which Uſe 2.

is the true voice of Chriſt among them: This Church here could diſcerne the voice of Chriſt even in her ſleepe, how much more eaſily if ſhee had been well awake?

Uſe 3. Thirdly, this is to exhort both Miniſters and other faithfull Chriſtians to watchfulneſſe, leſt otherwiſe corruption in doctrine and worſhip grow amongſt the people, till the locks of Chriſt bee wholly dabled with ſuperſtitions; the locks of Chriſt, to wit, the common Chriſtians.

Uſe 4. Fourthly, this may teach us to know that they provide not well for the direction of their owne judgements, that depend upon the voice of the ancient Churches for their chiefe patterne and guidance in doctrine and worſhip: who would build upon the words of a man (though otherwiſe a good man) when hee is halfe aſleepe?

Uſe 5. Fifthly, hence we may diſcern it is better the Church ſhould open to Chriſt, appearing before him in the naked ſimplicity of his worſhip, then to cover our ſelves and his worſhip with the blankets and inventions of mens weaving, which will but lull the Church aſleepe in drowſie performances of perfunctory worſhip, and cauſe Chriſt to withdraw himſelfe from us.

Sixthly,

Sixthly, this may teach us to know, to our ſhame and griefe, that our drowſie hearts will neglect to open to Chriſt upon his calling and knocking, unleſſe he be pleaſed to put the finger of his ſpirit into our hearts, to open an entrance for himſelfe. Uſe 6.

Seventhly, the faithfull muſt not wonder, if, opening their hearts to Chriſt and ſeeking after him, ſometimes they finde him not; for it was ſo with the Church here, and hath beene ſo with the faithfull in all ages: We neglecting to receive him when he offereth himſelfe, wee muſt not wonder if for a time he neglect us. Uſe 7.

Eighthly, we may from hence learn that bad Miniſters wil ſooner bear with any diſorder in people, then ſerious ſeeking after Chriſt, and after the purity of ordinances. Uſe 8.

Ninthly, we may here ſee perſecutions alienate the affections of the faithfull, but inflame them to more ardency & earneſt purſuite after Chriſt, as this Church did. Uſe 9.

Tenthly, it may be known the Church hath lyen in a deep ſleep, when common Chriſtians can more acknowledge the Church then Chriſt himſelfe, when they can ſee her to be *the faireſt among women*, but know not any eminent worth in Chriſt. Uſe 10.

Use 11. Eleventhly, the estate of many Churches, in many ages, maketh but one bodie of Christ; in every of which Christ manifesteth himselfe, in some members more eminently then in others.

Use 12. Twelvethly, Christ had his faithfull people and members in the world before *Luther* was borne; yea, he shewed himself glorious in sundry of them, in the darkest times of Popery.

Use 13. Thirteenthly, in Christ its well knowne there is nothing but what is lovely and desirable; even persecutions for his sake are lovely and glorious.

Use 14. Fourteenthly, it is no comfort, or but small, to know Christ to bee every way precious and excellent, unlesse wee can also say, hee is ours: *This is my beloved, this is my friend, O yee daughters of Jerusalem.*

Use 15. Fifteenthly, the affectionate faithfull preaching and setting forth of Christ, stirreth up in others a saving knowledge of Christ, and hearty affection to him. The Church here describeth Christ affectionately and faithfully, speaketh of him as her owne; whence the daughters of *Jerusalem* are converted and stirred up to seeke after him.

Lastly,

Laſtly, hearts truely touched with ſincere deſire after Chriſt, choſe rather to ſeeke him in the Church, in the fellowſhip of the Church, then by wayes of ſeparation, as this Church did: *Whither is thy beloved turned aſide? that wee may ſeeke him with thee.* Uſe 16.

My beloved is gone into his garden.] Cant.6. 2—9.

The holy Ghoſt in theſe words deſcendeth to ſet forth the ſtate of the Church reformed by the Miniſtry of *Luther*, and other late Divines, as in the verſe following the calling of the *Jewes*.

This reformed Church is diverſly deſcribed:

Firſt, by Chriſts viſitation of her, together with the ends thereof:

1 *To feede in the gardens.*

2 *To gather lillies, verſe* 2.

Secondly, by her mutuall fellowſhip with Chriſt, *verſe* 3.

Thirdly, by her degrees of riſing: wherin ſhee is likened to be, *verſe* 4.

1 As *Tirzah.*

2 As *Jeruſalem.*

3 As *an army with Banners.*

Fourthly, by her members, ver. 5, 6, 7.

1 *Eyes.*

2 *Haire*

2 *Haire,*
3 *Teeth.*
4 *Temples.*

Fiftly, by comparing the ſeverall reformed Churches, as amongſt themſelves, and preferring one above the reſt of the reformed Churches there:

1 As *Queenes*, 60.
2 As *Concubines*, 80.
3 As *Virgins without number*, verſe 8.
4 As *a Dove*; and who,
Firſt, to Chriſt is undefiled.

Secondly, to the whole Church as an *onely one*, as *a choice one.*

Thirdly, to the reſt:

1 Bleſſed, to the *Daughters.*
2 Praiſed, to the *Queenes* and *Concubines*, verſe 8. 9.

Verſe 2. *My beloved is gone downe into his garden, to the beds of ſpices, to feed in the garden, and to gather lilies.*

My beloved is gone downe into his garden:] The Church, which Chriſt next viſited, and wherein hee was firſt found in that generall Apoſtacy wherein the Church ſought Chriſt and could not find him.

In the former Chapter was the Church of

of *Wittenburg* reformed by the Miniſtry of *Luther*, which was a garden; being

Firſt, ſtored with variety of godly people, as ſweete flowers ſet in order, ſome teaching, ſome hearing.

Secondly, fenced in as with a hedge, pale or wall, by the protection of *Frederick* the good Duke of *Saxony*.

Thirdly, a place wherein Chriſt walked (as wee do in our gardens) to refreſh himſelfe and his friends.

Is gone downe into his garden,] Deſcending from thoſe famous Cities and eminent places of *Rome* and *Conſtantinople*, into a meane country citie.

To the beds of ſpices:] Becauſe in *Germany*, at that time, ſundry Chriſtians were called and ſorted into ſeverall beds and companies in ſeverall places, though not attaining at the firſt to be ſo many gardens, ſo many ſeverall Churches.

To feed in the gardens.] In proceſſe of time, theſe ſeverall beds of ſpices (companies of Chriſtians) grew up to the faſhion of juſt and full Churches in *Zurich*, *Stranburgh*, *Braſſel*, *Berne*, *Geneva*, beſides thoſe in *Haſsia* and *Pruſsia*.

To feede,]

Firſt,

First, both himselfe with his peoples prayers, and other worship and obedience.

Secondly, his people with his word and sacraments, and other ordinances.

And to *gather lillies*; that is to gather and call more & more faithfull Christians out of a wild field of worldly people into the fellowship of his Church, as it were, *to gather lilies into his garden.*

They are called *lillies*,

Mat. 6. 29. Pro. 12. 26 First, for their fairnesse.

Secondly, for excellency, or eminency.

Mat. 6. 28, 29. Thirdly, for Gods care in providing for them beyond their owne labour and industry.

Verse 3. *I am my beloveds, and my beloved is mine: he feedeth among the lillies.*

I am my beloveds, and my beloved is mine.] Which words imply foure things:

First, that the Church had familiar fellowship with Christ in his holy publike ordinances; especially in the maine doctrine of pardon of sins by Christs bloud alone, and of justification by faith.

Secondly, that shee enioyed this fellowship with him, before the time of her deliverance out of a *Babylonish*, or *Romish* captivity: * for the same words

*Chap. 2. verse 15.

are

are uſed upon the deliverance out of *Babel*, and enjoying Gods ordinances in their owne country; but with this difference: there the Church ſaith, *My beloved is mine, and I am his*; becauſe, firſt, he delivered her out of *Babel* before hee gave her the free uſe of his ordinances; but here the Church ſaith, *I am my beloveds, and my beloved is mine*; becauſe ſhee firſt found Chriſt in his ordinances, before ſhee enjoyed deliverance from ſubjection to *Rome*; for *Luther* preached againſt the Popes pardons, before he rejected the ſupremacy of the Pope.

Thirdly, their open profeſsion of their fellowſhip with Chriſt, when the Princes of *Germany* openly proteſted againſt the Maſſe, & other corruptions in the Church, and avowed the defence of the reformation begun; whence they were afterward called Proteſtants. Sleyden. lib. 6. 7.

4ly, Chriſts gracious protection of thoſe Churches, ſpecially in their firſt beginnings: for how ſhould *Luther* (a poor Frier) have attempted and gone through with ſo great a work, againſt ſuch great and generall oppoſition, and in the end die quietly in his bed, if Chriſt had not held him as

as it were in his armes?

He feedeth among the lilies.] Hee refreſheth himſelfe and ſtrengtheneth his people, converſing amongſt them, who ſtrove for whiteneſſe, and purity, and reformation.

Verſe 4. *Thou art beautifull, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jeruſalem, terrible as an army with banners.*

Thou art beautifull as Tirzah.] *Tirzah* was the chiefe City of the Kingdome of *Iſrael*, after they had ſeparated themſelves from *Judah*, untill *Samaria* was afterward builded *.

*1 Kin. 14.17.& 15.33.

The Citie and Governers of it (the people having recourſe to it for judgement, rather then to *Jeruſalem*) were at firſt in diſgrace and obloquie with the *Jewes* for their ſchiſme and ſeparation from the houſe of David at *Jeruſalem*, and for her rebellion againſt the King of *Judah*; but this did not diminiſh her beauty, becauſe this ſeparation was from God.

Afterward *Tirzah* loſt her beauty by erecting the golden Calves, and falling off (not onely from the idolatry of *Solomon*, wherein they did well, but) from the true worſhip of God, reſtored and continued

1 Kings 12.24.

nued in the Temple of *Jeruſalem*. But *Solomon* here ſpeaketh of *Tirzah* while ſhee reteined her beauty: And indeed the reformed Churches were in this like unto *Tirzah*; at firſt in diſgrace and obloquie for their ſeparation from *Rome*, and rebellion againſt the Emperour and other Princes; and yet never the leſſe beautifull, becauſe this ſeparation was from God, in regard of Idolatries of the Church of *Rome*, greater then thoſe of *Solomon*.

Thus the Duke of *Saxony* and the Landgrave of *Haſsia* were proſcribed as rebels againſt the Emperour, and yet their cauſe was beautifull and good. The faithfull at that time in England were burned in King *Henry* the eighth's dayes, as Hereticks, and refractory Subjects or Rebels, yet beautifull in Gods ſight.

Comely as Jeruſalem.] In proceſſe of time the Church wore out the ſuſpition and diſgrace of hereſie, and ſeparation and rebellion, and was countenanced and adorned by Royall Lawes in the daies of King *Edward* the ſixth, and by Lawes of the Empire tolerating the Proteſtant Princes, ſo that the Church ſeemed as *Jeruſalem*, the ſtate of Princes, the true Church

Psal. 122, 3—5. Church of God, & at unity also within it selfe, wherein the comelinesse consisted: for, as *Jerusalem* had been three Cities, *Zion, Salem, Millo*, and all three were knit together into one *Jerusalem*: so the three differences between *Lutherans* & *Calvinists* in doctrine and discipline at *Geneva*, were all compacted together in brotherly love, in their harmony of confessions.

Terrible as an army with banners.] The Church was *beautifull as Tirzah* in King *Henry* the eighths time, *comely as Jerusalem* in King *Edward* the sixths time, *terrible as an army with banners* in Queen *Elisabeths* time, when the Protestant Princes grew formidable to the Emperour, England and the low Countries to the *Spaniard* & Pope. How terrible was that overthrow which the *Spaniard* in 88. receiv'd?

Verse 5. *chap. 4. 9. *Turn away thine eies, &c.*] The eies, as above*, of the Church assembled, are the ministers, or the members considered apart; as first, knowledge; secondly, faith: In both respects the eies of the Church were wonderfull amiable: so that Christ speaketh affectionatly to the Church after the manner of Lovers, ravished with the beauty of their Spouses.

Turne

Turne away thine eyes, for they have overcome me.]

What worthy Miniſters did that firſt age of the Reformed Churches yeeld? as *Luther, Calvin, Martin Bucer, Cranmer, Hooper, Ridley, Latymer,* &c. What a wonderfull meaſure of heavenly light did they of a ſudden bring into the Church? and that out of the middeſt of darkneſſe and Popery; from whence it was, that the knowledge and faith of the Faithfull then was wonderfully enlarged far beyond the ignorance of former times. *Peter Martyr.*

The eyes of the Faithfull in Chriſts time lay under their locks, as hindered from cleere ſight by many errors; but the eyes of the Faithfull, now ſeeing the truth much more plainly, are not hindered by ſuch locks hanging over them: How cleere was their faith, that having ſeene him which was inviſible, feared not the fierceneſſe of their Kings and Princes, but endured patiently fiery Perſecutions, and bloody Maſſacres? *Chap. 4. 1.* *Heb. 11. 27.*

Thy haire is like a flock of Goats. *Ver. 5. 7.*

Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep which goe up from washing.

As a piece of Pomgranat are thy temples within thy locks.

The estate of common Christians set out by the haire, and of the Ministers set out by the teeth, and of the Church Governours set forth by the piece of Pomgranat, was the same in the Church reformed, as in the Primitive Church, where the description of these parts is used, and here repeated onely with this difference: The teeth are not so even cut in reformed Churches as in Christs time; some of them exceed their Brethren in Authority and Jurisdiction, whereas those were framed to more brotherly love in Christs time; whence the teeth they are said to bee even cut, which in these teeth is here left out; yet both the Ministers of higher and lower ranke, were as sheepe flocking and consorting together, washed with the Laver of Regeneration, fruitfull and powerfull in their Ministry, and therefore are here described, as a flock

Chap. 4. 1.-3.

of

of sheepe come up from the washing, *whereof every one beareth twins, and none is barren among them.* *Ver.6.*

First, we may here learn to behold a different estate of the Church. Sometimes it is in a Garden; sundry Christians gathered together into beds and knots, and growing up into good order together, delighting and refreshing both God and man with the savor of their sweetnesse: such was, and is the estate of the Church reformed. Sometimes againe, the members of the Church scattered abroad in the wilde fields, seeking where they may finde Christ, as in the former Chapter. *Use* 1.

The Church is here visible, as in a Garden, in some of their eminent and principall members. If then the Papists aske, where was the Church visible before *Luther*? The answer is, it was visible, not in open Congregations indeed, as it were Gardens; but in sundry members of the Church, as sweet spices and flowers, growing here and there, whom the Popes and their Instruments, like wilde Boares sought

The Church how visible before *Luther.*

to root out, and yet God preſerveth them.

Sometime, the Church findeth Chriſt comfortably in her ſolemne aſſemblies, when good Chriſtians are met together to ſerve him in the ſimplicity of his ordinances: ſometimes when they can finde no ſuch Gardens, nor him in any place openly worſhipped, yet even then they ſeek him here and there where they can finde him.

Uſe 2. Secondly, the like uſes are here to be made of theſe Gardens, of that Cha. 4. ver. 14.

Uſe 3. Thirdly, to teach us a true deſcription of a Church: It is, as it were, a Garden, an aſſembly of many good Chriſtians, or Saints, as it were ſweet ſpices, or flowers, ſet in order, as it were beds, or knots, amongſt whom Chriſt walketh, they enjoying fellowſhip with him in his publique ordinances, and he with them.

Uſe 4. Separatiſts. Fourthly, to refuſe the arrogancy, or ignorance of the Separatiſts, who refuſe to keepe fellowſhip with reformed

med Churches, whom Christ yet keepes fellowship with; shall man bee more pure than his maker? or the sons of mortall men more holy than the sons of God? Iob 4.17.

Fifthly, to exclude the Popish Synagogues from the number of Christs Gardens; the Gardens and Churches of Christ, as they have Christ walking in them, so they know it, and professe it, and rejoyce in it. *Vse 5.*

I am my welbeloveds, and my welbeloved is mine. The Church of Rome disdaines such a song as Hereticall presumption, to say, *I am my welbeloveds, and he is mine.* *Vers. 3.*

Sixtly, this doth teach us, that when Churches keep themselves close to Christ, and to the simplicity of his ordinances, that they can say, *I am my welbeloveds, and he is mine.* Christ will keep himselfe powerfull and gracious amongst them, for their protection and comfort; he will not faile to shew himselfe theirs, when they faile not to shew themselves his. *Vse 6.*

Seventhly, this may teach us, not to *Vse 7.*

wonder if Christian assemblies bee at first suspected, as *Tirzah* for sedition, separation, &c. It is the lot of Gods Church, which when it groweth up to be better known, will appear to be as it is, comely as *Ierusalem*.

Vse 8. Eightly, from the description of the Church here by her Members, Eyes, Haire, Teeth, Temples; gather here againe in the same Uses made of the like description, Chap. 4. verse 1, 2, 3. pag. in Uses 2, 3, 4. there expressed.

Vse 9. Ninthly, observe the Reformed Churches to be the same that the Primitive Church in Christs time, was in sundry principall Members and respects; and therefore the same Members in the same sort described, word for word; yea, such fellowship as the Church of the Jewes had with Christ comming out of Babylon, The same have the Reformed Churches with Christ comming out of Romish Babylon.

Cant. 2. 16. ver. 3.

Chap. 6. *Vers.* 8. *There are threescore Queenes, and fourscore Concubines, and Virgins without number.*

This

This verſe containes the laſt part of the deſcription of the eſtate of the Reformed Churches, which is a compariſon of them together amongſt themſelves; of whom ſome are,

First, Queenes, and they are threeſcore.

Secondly, Concubines, and they are fourſcore.

Thirdly, Damoſels, and they without number.

Secondly, one is eminent above them all unto Chriſt: First, a Dove, Secondly, undefiled.

Secondly, her ſelfe one.

Thirdly, her mother, an onely choice one.

Fourthly, her daughter, bleſſed.

Fifthly, the Queenes and Concubines commended her.

There are threeſcore Queenes, and fourſcore Concubines, and Damoſels, *or virgins, without number.* *Verſe* 8.

Queenes differ from Concubines in foure reſpects:

First, Queenes, or chiefe wives are taken into fellowſhip with their royal

Gen.29.22 husbands by ſolemne ſtipulation, and with conſent and ſolemne rejoycing of friends : The Concubines are not ſo, as *Bilhah* and *Zilpah*, &c. A man takes ſuch to him rather by right of Dominion, than by fellowſhip of Wedlock.

Secondly, Queenes, or chiefe wives bring with them dowries to their huſ-

* 1 King. 9. 16. Acts 3. Sect. 2. * Without Dowrie. bands *.

Hence, *Lesbonius* to *Luſitoles*, in Matrimony, would not give his ſiſter * *ſine dote*, leſt he ſhould ſeeme to give her in *Concubinatum potiùs quam in Matrimonium:* But Concubines were taken without dowry for the moſt part, as *Hagar*, *Bilhah*, *Zilpah*, &c.

Thirdly, chiefe wives had the keyes of the families in their owne hands, they had government of the houſe under and with their husbands. Hence it

Gen. 16. 3. verſe 6. verſe 8. verſe 8. verſe 9. is that *Hagar*, though called *Abrahams* wife, yet is ſaid to be in *Sarahs* hand, who alſo corrected her : the Angel calleth her *Sarahs* maid, and ſhe calleth *Sarah* her Miſtreſſe, as likewiſe the Angel doth.

Concubines

Concubines, though ſecondary wives, yet were but as ſervants, ſave onely they were admitted to the fellowſhip of the bed.

Fourthly, chiefe wives brought forth children, to whom belonged the Inheritance; whereas Concubines children had, for the moſt part onely, ſome gifts given them. That *Dan* and *Naptali*, *Gad* and *Aſher*, the ſons of *Bilhah* and *Zilphah* had Inheritances among their brethren, was by extraordinary diſpenſation. Geneſ. 25. 5,6.

Queenes then are ſuch Reformed Congregations where ſuch properties of Queenes are found: Chriſt (indeed) lookes for no Dowrie from us for his owne uſe, he needeth nothing of ours, neither have we any thing to give him, but our owne nakedneſſe, filthineſſe, and beggery. Here therefore looke at Chriſt in the perſons of the Miniſters, whoſe Vicegerents they are, and Embaſſadours alſo; and in whoſe name they being married to the Churches, doe beget children to Chriſt; though Miniſters conſidered in compariſon with Chriſt, Ezek. 16. 5,6. 1 Cor. 4. 15

Chriſt, they are but as the friends of the Bridegroome, not Bridegroomes
Iohn 3.29. themſelves. Such Churches then, and Congregations are Queenes, whom the Miniſters and Congregations doe with mutuall free conſent chuſe either the other; as when the people do give
2 Cor. 8.5. up themſelves, firſt, to the Lord, and then to the Miniſters by the will of God. Of this ſort are ſundry Congregations in England, and very many in the Reformed forraigne Churches: other Congregations, which have Miniſters, thruſt upon them without their liking and conſent, and whom Miniſters have to them by ſome clandeſtine conveyances, are more like to Concubines.

Againe, ſuch Congregations as come to their Miniſters with a good dowry, and comfortable and honourable maintenance, they are like wives. Others who bring little or no maintenance with them, are like to Concubines, though indeed the former condition is more eſſentiall to lawfull marriage; to wit, free conſent, and mutuall

mutuall ſtipulation on both ſides; for as ſometimes lawfull wives have but poore dowries, and Concubines ſometimes bring large maintenance with them: ſo ſome Congregations that freely conſent to the acceptance of their Miniſters can allow them but ſlender maintenance, whereas ſome others upon whom Miniſters thruſt themſelves are richly endowed: Furthermore, ſuch Congregations as enjoy the power of the keyes, they are as Queenes, lawfull wives. The keyes of the Kingdome of Heaven, are

Firſt, the one of knowledge, *Luke* 11. 52.

Secondly, the other of Juriſdiction, *Mat.* 18. 18. and both of them mentioned, *Mat.* 16. 19.

Where then a Congregation enjoyeth a faithfull Miniſtry, opening an entrance into the Kingdome of Heaven to penitent believers, and ſhutting it againſt impenitent hypocrites and ſcandalous livers, there the power of the keyes is not wanting; and if withall they have liberty exerciſing Juriſ-

Juriſdiction, there is their Queen-like, or wive-like authority more compleat. Of this ſort are divers, both Engliſh and forraigne Churches, though ſundry Germane Churches diſpenſing the keyes of knowledge more corruptly in their Doctrine of the Sacrament, and predeſtination, and neglecting the uſe of excommunication, doe rather turne to the condition of Concubines.

But ſuch Churches as have no Preachers, or ſuch as have no power in their gifts to open and ſhut the Kingdome of Heaven, to the conſcience and ſoules of men, they are as Concubines.

Laſtly, ſuch Congregations where the people remaine ſtill ignorant in darkneſſe, and are not brought on to be begotten of God by the lively word of Regeneration, but continue altogether ignorant, worldly, and prophane; they are as Concubines, whoſe children inherit not, though God may give them outward bleſſings. But ſuch Congregations where the word is lively to the begetting of ſoules to an

an immortall inheritance, they are lawfull wives, yea Queenes: Of this ſort our Engliſh and forraigne Churches have many, (God be bleſſed) though the Church of *Sardis* hath but a few names. Revel. 3. 4.

Damoſels are without number, &c.] Damoſels, or Virgins in this marriage ſong are of leſſe reckoning, as being yet either not ſpoken to in way of marriage by Chriſt and his Miniſters, or coily refuſing him. Of this ſort there were many Churches at the firſt reforming of the Goſpel, to whom for want of Miniſters Readers were ſent; whence one of the Martyrs wiſhed, that every able Miniſter might have ten Congregations committed to his charge, till further proviſion could be made; ſo that ſuch Churches there were, even ten to one, abundantly many that ſcarcely heard of Chriſts knocking at their hearts by any conſcionable Miniſtry; yea, and how many be there at this day, that either doe want ſuch Miniſters as doe eſpouſe them to Chriſt, or elſe doe coily

coily deny their motions, and ſtand out againſt Chriſt and their Miniſters.

Of Queens he reckoneth threeſcore, of Concubines foureſcore. A certaine number put for an uncertaine; and of Churches, the leſſe pure the greater.

Damoſels he reckons without number.

Firſt, partly, becauſe they have been exceeding many of them, and are ſtill too many.

Secondly, partly, becauſe Chriſt maketh no account of them, as if they were with him *nullius numeri*, not worth the reckoning.

Verſ. 9. *But my Dove, my undefiled is one, &c.*] A Dove is noted,

Firſt, for her chaſtity;

Ma. 10. 16. Secondly, mildeneſſe, or innocency: ſuch are thoſe Churches which goe not a whoring after any Superſtition, or Idolatry, nor exerciſe that captivity of Tyranny over their Siſter Churches, which the Popiſh watchmen are Cant. 5. 7. taxed for; that ſmote and wounded the Members of the Churches for ſeeking

ſeeking after Chriſt, and tooke her vaile from her, which are unſpotted, unde filed, either

Firſt, of Romiſh pollutions, or

Secondly, of wordly courſes.

Is one; ſuch congregations are

Firſt, few, as one to 60. or 80.

Secondly, at unity, or brotherly love one with another, as one body, though ſcattered into many places, as *England*, *Scotland*, *Germany*, &c. In all Chriſtendome, ſome Churches are more chaſte, milde, and unſpotted than others, even of the ſame countrey; and yet ſuch are but few, and though few, yet at entire unity as one body.

The onely one of her Mother, the choyceſt one of her that bare her.] In the Hebrew phraſe, the whole is the Mother, the parts are the Members. The true Catholique Church of Chriſt is the Mother of all Reformed Daughters; and theſe Daughter Churches that are moſt chaſte and milde, and undefiled, they are beſt eſteemed, and beſt beloved of the Mother Catholique Church, as comming neereſt to her in chaſtity, *Verſe 9*

chaſtity, innocency, purity, &c.

Verſe 9. *The Daughters ſaw her, and bleſſed her; yea, the Queenes and the Concubines, and they praiſed her.*] Theſe Daughters, whether they be the Members of the unſpotted Churches mentioned in the former verſe, either of both, together with theſe Churches that are as Queenes and Concubines, doe give honourable teſtimony of theſe Congregations that are moſt reformed, and wiſh them all proſperity, the good things of this life, and a better.

To bleſſe is more than to praiſe: Praiſe is the acknowledging of any good thing in her, but bleſſing is the acknowledgement:

First, of Divine good things: And

Secondly, thoſe drawing the Churches and themſelves therein neerer to God.

Verſ. 10. 13. *who is ſhee that looketh forth as the morning, &c.*] In theſe verſes, the calling and ariſing of the Church of the Jewes is deſcribed by ſix Arguments:

First,

First, by the unexpectednesse of her arising, joyned with the admiration of it, *who is she that looketh forth*, ver. 10.

Secondly, by the place of her arising, the morning or the East Countries.

Thirdly, by the degrees and beauty of her grace.

First, fresh as the morning.

Secondly, faire as the Moone.

Thirdly, bright and cleer as the Sun.

Fourthly, *terrible as an Army with Banners*, ver. 10.

Fourthly, by Christs visitation of her with the end of it, ver. 11.

Fifthly, by the unexpected helpes which this Church found for her return, v. 12.

Sixthly, by the earnestnesse of her calling given her, *Return, Return*, four times repeated.

who is this that looketh forth?] These words expresse the unexpected admirable arising of a new Church; and that after the Reformed Churches of the Gentiles; she is a *Shulamite*, alluding to *Salem* the ancient name of *Ierusalem*, Chap. 7. 6.

the Mother City of the JEWES.

This Church then thus ariſing, is that of the Jewes which we looke for; whoſe beginning for ſudden converſion of multitudes, ſhall be admirable to themſelves and others.

Iſa 66.8. & 49.12.

As the morning.] Her ariſing is reſembled by the morning,

Firſt, becauſe this Church ſhall ariſe from the Eaſterne Countries.

Rev.16.12.

Secondly, her ariſing ſhall be like a new Reſurrection from the dead.

Rom.11,15.

Thirdly, her ariſing ſhall be ſpeedily, as the ſame phraſe intimates.

Iſa.58.8. & 60.19,20

Faire as the Moon, bright as the Sun.] The Moone is faire by beauty communicated to her from the Sun. In the Suns brightneſſe is light, heat, refreſhing, and all in a glorious manner.

Iſa. 6.10, 20.& 24.23

Iſa. 33.24. & 60.21.

The Citizens of that Church ſhall all at that time, or at leaſt the body of them, have their ſins forgiven them by the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt imputed to them. They ſhal enjoy abundant light of heavenly knowledge. They ſhall excell in purity of holineſſe. They ſhall abound in conſolations to the

Iſai. 59.21. Zech.14. 20 21.

the refreſhing of themſelves and others. Iſa 66.10.11

Terrible as an Army with Banners.] Read *Revel.* 19.14.21. The Armies of the Jewes ſhall bee terrible to the Turkes and Tartars, and to the falſe Prophet then driven from Rome by ten Chriſtian Princes, and aſſociating himſelfe to the Turke for ſuccour. Ezek.38 & 39. cha.

I went down into the Garden of Nuts.] The Jewiſh Synagogues, ſo called, becauſe of that voice of hardneſſe and blindneſſe drawne over their hearts, as it were a hard Nut-ſhell over the Kernell. Rom. 11. 8,10. 2 Cor. 3. 14.15.

To ſee the fruits of the valleys.] Valleyes lying in the ſhade between two mountaines, bring forth fruit late: ſo the Jewes are long before they bring forth fruit unto Chriſt.

To ſee whether the Vine flouriſhed, and the Pomgranates budded.] The Jewes, that for hardneſſe of heart, are like a Garden of Nuts; yet when their converſion ſhall bee wrought, will bee as Vines and Pomgranates, bring forth ſweet and wholeſome fruits to the

Iudg.9.13. refreſhing of GOD and Man.

Or ever I was aware, my ſoule made me like the Charets of Amminadib.] Or ſet me upon the Charets of a willing people; not that any thing commeth at unawares to Chriſt in his owne perſon; but becauſe to his Miniſters, that in his Name ſhall goe into this Garden of Nuts.

The Iewes ſhall appeare unexpectedly, prepared to embrace Chriſts calling: they ſhall finde the Iewes as Charets of willing people, ready to march with them, whatſoever in Chriſts Name they ſhall call; their ſoule ſhould no ſooner deſire it, but they ſhould bee ſet in all readineſſe; where alſo is intimated the willing readineſſe of a willing people among the Gentiles, to convey the Iewes into their owne Countrie, with Charets, and horſes, and Dromedaries.

Iſai 66.20. & 49.23.24.

Verſe 13. *Returne, returne, O Shulamite: returne, returne, that we may looke upon thee: what will ye ſee in the Shulamite? as it were the company of two armies.*

Returne,

Returne, returne, O Shulamite, returne.] This call ſo often repeated, doth imply, Iſai 62.67.

Firſt, the earneſtneſſe of the Miniſters that ſhall call them.

Secondly, the haſte that they would have them to make in going through with their converſion.

That we may looke upon thee, or behold thee.] It is the deſire of the Miniſters, and of all the Faithfull, to behold this glorious Church when ſhee ſhall be called.

What will yee ſee in the Shulamite?] But, as it were, the company of two Armies, or the hoſte of *Mahanaim*. Gen. 32.1,2.

This is ſpoken, either becauſe the Iewes ſhall, preſently upon their converſion, marſhall, or ranke themſelves into Armies againſt *Gog* and *Magog*, *ver.* 10. where ſhe is ſaid to ariſe *terrible as an Army with Banners*. Or elſe taking the word properly; the holy Ghoſt compareth the Iewes to an hoſte of Angels, which *Iacob* ſaw at *Mahanaim*; as indeed the feeble in that day ſhall be valiant as the Angels Gen. 32.1. Zech. 12.8.

of God. This Interpretation ſeemeth to me to be the more likely, becauſe her warlike proviſion was before mentioned, *ver.* 10. Or otherwiſe, the holy Ghoſt may allude to the hoſte of Iſrael and Judah, which went to bring up *David* from *Mahanaim* to *Ieruſalem*, after the Iſraelites were brought to ſee their errors in caſting him off for *Abſalom*; So ſhall the Jewes at their converſion, aſſemble for the eſtabliſhment of the Kingdome and Throne of Chriſt among them, after they ſhal be brought to ſee their foule errours in caſting off Chriſt ſo unworthily ſo long a time.

2 Sam. 19 9 10. 41. 43.

Uſe 1. The firſt Uſe of this is for diſcerning a different eſtate of all Chriſtian Churches and Congregations, and triall of our owne pariſhes. In one of theſe rankes every Congregation is found, either a Queene, a Concubine, a Damoſell, or a Dove: If we have freely conſented to the entertainment of a faithfull Miniſtery, comming to us in the Name of Chriſt; if we bring with us to him a ſufficient dowry for his

his maintenance; If the word of God ſhall be powerfully diſpenſed amongſt us, and the opening and ſhutting of the Kingdome of Heaven, and withall the key of Diſcipline bee not neglected: If our Congregations bring forth many children to God, partakers of the Heavenly Inheritance, then are our Congregations as chiefe wives, as Queenes to Jeſus Chriſt. But if our Miniſters finde not conjugall and free acceptance from us; if we be not willing to provide for them comfortable and honourable maintenance; If the word be not ſo diſpenſed that the people may finde themſelves either in good or evill eſtates; If our Congregations bring not forth regenerate Chriſtians to partake of the heavenly Inheritance, then are they but as Concubines in the ſight of God: If we have yet no Miniſters that wooe us, and beſeech us to be reconciled to Chriſt; or if they doe, yet we coily put them off with delayes, or refuſes, then are we Damoſels, but neither Queenes nor Concubines. But if 2 Cor. 5.20

of God. This Interpretation ſeemeth to me to be the more likely, becauſe her warlike proviſion was before mentioned, *ver.* 10. Or otherwiſe, the holy Ghoſt may allude to the hoſte of Iſrael and Judah, which went to bring up *David* from *Mahanaim* to *Ieruſalem*, after the Iſraelites were brought to ſee their errors in caſting him off for *Abſalom*; So ſhall the Jewes at their converſion, aſſemble for the eſtabliſhment of the Kingdome and Throne of Chriſt among them, after they ſhal be brought to ſee their foule errours in caſting off Chriſt ſo unworthily ſo long a time.

2 Sam. 19 9 10.14.43.

Uſe 1. The firſt Uſe of this is for diſcerning a different eſtate of all Chriſtian Churches and Congregations, and triall of our owne pariſhes. In one of theſe rankes every Congregation is found, either a Queene, a Concubine, a Damoſell, or a Dove: If we have freely conſented to the entertainment of a faithfull Miniſtery, comming to us in the Name of Chriſt; if we bring with us to him a ſufficient dowry for his

his maintenance; If the word of God ſhall be powerfully diſpenſed amongſt us, and the opening and ſhutting of the Kingdome of Heaven, and withall the key of Diſcipline bee not neglected: If our Congregations bring forth many children to God, partakers of the Heavenly Inheritance, then are our Congregations as chiefe wives, as Queenes to Jeſus Chriſt. But if our Miniſters finde not conjugall and free acceptance from us; if we be not willing to provide for them comfortable and honourable maintenance; If the word be not ſo diſpenſed that the people may finde themſelves either in good or evill eſtates; If our Congregations bring not forth regenerate Chriſtians to partake of the heavenly Inheritance, then are they but as Concubines in the ſight of God: If we have yet no Miniſters that wooe us, and beſeech us to be reconciled to Chriſt; or if they doe, yet we coily put them off with delayes, or refuſes, then are we Damoſels, but neither Queenes nor Concubines. But if 2 Cor. 5.20

we finde all the properties of Queenes belonging to us, and withall, finde a love and care to keepe our ſelves chaſte to Chriſt, and innocent to man, and undefiled, and unſpotted, both of the World and of *Rome*; then are we Doves to Chriſt Jeſus, choyceſt children of the true Catholique Church.

A ſecond Uſe is for a diſcerning of a different eſtate of all Chriſtian ſouls, and triall of our owne eſtates before God; if our hearts have never yet beene called and knocked at by the lively word of Gods Ordinances, or if we have coily put off our Repentance to this day, or refuſe to hearken to Chriſt, then are we Damoſels. If we bring forth ſeed of Righteouſneſſe to Chriſt, by reaſon we are under the government of ſuch who will require it, and well may command it of us, we are but as Concubines. But if we freely condeſcend to receive and embrace Chriſt into our hearts with entire conjugall affection; and give up our ſelves to him to bring forth the fruits

of

of his Spirit, and are enabled to governe our ſelves and families after his will, then are we Royall Spouſes unto Chriſt Jeſus: And if beyond this we grow up to a holy jealouſie againſt our ſelves, and keepe our ſelves to Chriſt chaſte, innocent, and undefiled, and endeavour to *cleanſe our ſelves from all filthines of fleſh and ſpirit*; then are we as Doves unto Jeſus Chriſt. 2 Cor. 7. 1.

A third Uſe to direct and inſtruct Miniſters and people how to approve themſelves and their Congregations in beſt ſort unto Chriſt. Let not Miniſters thruſt themſelves upon their people againſt their conſents, but let their people freely accept them, and comfortably maintaine them: Let the Miniſters bee faithfull in diſpenſing Gods Ordinances, and the people obedient, to give up themſelves to Chriſt and his truth, till both grow up to heavenly and holy purity of worſhip and life; ſo ſhall our Congregations bee as Queenes and Doves to Jeſus Chriſt. *Uſe 3.*

Uſe 4. A fourth Uſe may be to encourage men to wayes of ſpotleſſe Innocency; they are not diſgracefull, but bleſſed of the Faithfull, and praiſed, even of them that are without.

Uſe 5. Fifthly, to reprove the children of the ſeparation, who reproach the Church in ſtead of bleſſing, or praiſing them.

Uſe 6. Sixthly, this may teach us to expect a powerfull and glorious calling of the Jewes in all the particulars before deſcribed: ſay, they bee now, as *Gideons* Fleece, dry; when the Gentiles are moyſtned with heavenly dew, they ſhall againe be moyſtened, when we ſhall ſeeme dry in compariſon of them. Though *Leah* ſtep firſt into *Iacobs* Bed, and ſo the leſſe comely Church of the Gentiles into the fellowſhip with Chriſt; yet the Church of the Iewes, as beautifull as *Rachel*, ſhall in the end finde fellowſhip with Chriſt.

The glory of their calling appeares in the Text, becauſe the holy Ghoſt deſcribes her by compariſons, not fetched

fetched from earthly flowers, or metals, or jewels; but from heavenly lights, the Morning, Moone, Sunne.

It appeareth further in their unexpected and free readineſſe to embrace Chriſt.

The power of their calling appears in their earneſtneſſe, and zeale of their Miniſtry in breaking the hard ſhell of their hearts wherewith they were formerly incloſed. *ver.* 11. In ſtirring them up to fight manfully, and terribly Gods battels againſt the enimies of the Church, *ver.* 13.

The Lord ſpeedily haſten the comming of this *Shulamite*, that we may behold her, *Amen*.

THE

THE CANTICLES, OR SONG OF SONGS, opened and explained.

THE TEXT. CHAP. 7.

HOw beautifull are thy feet with ſhooes, O Princes daughter! the joynts of thy thighes are like Jewels, the work of the hands of a cunning workman.

2 *Thy navell is like a round goblet, which wanteth not liquor: thy belly is like an heap of wheat, ſet about with lillies.*

3 *Thy two breſts are like two young Roes that are twins.*

4 *Thy necke is as a tower of Ivory: thine eyes like the fiſh pooles in Heſhbon, by the gate of Bath-rabbim: thy noſe is as the tower of Leba-*

non,

non, which looketh toward Damaſcus.

5 *Thine head upon thee is like Carmel, and the haire of thine head like purple, the King is held in the galleries.*

6 *How fair, and how pleaſant art thou, O love, for delights!*

7 *This thy ſtature is like to a palm tree, and thy breſts to cluſters of grapes.*

8 *I ſaid, I will goe up to the palme tree, I will take hold of the boughes thereof: now alſo thy breſts ſhall be as cluſters of the vine, and the ſmell of thy noſe like apples.*

9 *And the roofe of thy mouth like the beſt wine for my beloved that goeth downe ſweetly, cauſing the lips of thoſe that are aſleep to ſpeake.*

10 *I am my beloveds, and his deſire is towards me.*

11 *Come, my beloved, let us goe forth into the field: let us lodge in the villages.*

12 *Let us get up early to the vineyards, let us ſee if the vine flouriſh, whether the tender grape appear, and the pomegranats bud forth, there will I give thee my loves.*

13 *The mandrakes give a ſmell, and at our gates are all manner of pleaſant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved.*

THis Chapter to the end of the fourth ver. of the eighth Chapter, deſcribeth a fourfold eſtate of the Iewiſh

Iewish Church. When they shall come to be converted unto the Lord: to wit,

First, as it shall be in gathering and growing up, *v.*1.5.

Secondly, as it shall be, growne up to her Stature and Maturity, *v.*6,7.

Thirdly, as it shall be further enlarged by the accesse of the Gentiles, *ver.* 8.10.

Fourthly, as it shall multiply and stretch it selfe into the Country villages, and throughout the Land of Israel, *v.* 11.—*v.*4. of Chap.8.

That in *ver.* 11. the Church inviteth Christ, and with him her selfe to have recourse into the Country Villages, is plaine in the words of the former verses, which set forth a threefold estate of the *Shulamite* converted, is evident by the Repetition of the verses, *ver.* 3. 7. 8. and all with some difference; and the brests are so described, *ver.* 3. and set forth an unsetled Ministry, quickly stirring up and downe to gather this Church and the scattered Members of it.

This

This Church then in gathering, is deſcribed by ten parts; Feet, Ioynts of Thighes, Navell, Belly, Breſts, Necke, Eyes, Noſe, Head, Haire.

How beautifull are thy feet with ſhooes, Verſe 1. *O Princes daughter! the joynts of thy thighes are like Iewels, the work of the hands of a cunning workman.*

How beautifull are thy feet with ſhooes, O Princes daughter!] In her feet ſhod with ſhooes there is a threefold beauty: for it implyeth

Firſt, her returne out of captivity; as on the contrary, bare feet is a ſigne of going into Captivity. Iſa. 20. 2. 4.

Secondly, her challenging and recovery of her laſt Inheritance in Iſrael, *Ruth* 4. 7, 8. Deut. 25. 9.

Thirdly, her walking in that peace of conſcience which the Goſpel prepareth: whereas he that walketh barefoot, either gathereth a thick brawny skin upon the ſoles of his feet; or if his feet bee more tender, hee pricketh them ever and anon with thornes, or little ſharpe ſtones as ſcruples: a conſcience not furniſhed with true peace, Ephe. 6. 15.

either

either waxeth senseleſſe and brawny, or elſe ſcrupulous & anxious: all the three things are beautifull and glorious; as on the contrary, it is a great diſturbance and deformity to goe into captivity, to ſell and foregoe a mans Inheritance, to walke unquietly and uncomfortably: and if it bee beautifull and glorious to returne out of bodily captivity, and to recover the earthly Inheritance; how much more is it together with theſe outward things, to joyne a returne out of ſpirituall captivity, and recovery of an everlaſting Inheritance, as the Iewes ſhall doe at their converſion?

O Princes daughter!] So called,

Firſt, becauſe they are born of God, the Prince of Princes.

Secondly, the Iewes converted ſhall be of much glory and authority, even as the Kings of the Earth. Rev. 16,12.

The joynts of thy thighes, &c.] The word ſignifies whole bones of the thighes; they for their apt and ready turning in their converſion to God, are like well wrought pretious Iewels, the

the work of the hand of God, the Spirituall workman of all the works of the Church.

Thy navell, &c. thy belly is like the navell, &c.] The navell and belly are both hidden parts, not conſpicuous to them without; and therefore ſet forth the two Myſteries, or Sacraments of the Church, Baptiſme, and the Lords Supper. The Navell, ſerving for the nouriſhing of the Infant in the wombe, reſembleth Baptiſme, nouriſhing Infants, and new borne babes in the wombe of the Church.

It wanteth not liquor:

Firſt, of the blood of Chriſt to juſtifie us from ſin.

Secondly, of the Spirit of Chriſt to ſanctifie and cleanſe us from ſin.

The belly: to wit, the Lords Supper, is as an heape of wheat, for ſtore of excellent, and ſweet, and fine nouriſhment, ſet about with lillies; becauſe onely the faithfull pure Chriſtians ſhall bee admitted to partake in that Sacrament.

The Lords Table ſhall not bee ſet

about with weeds, prophane and ſcandalous ſinners, but with *Lillies*, worthy Communicants.

Thy two breſts (the Teachers of that Church) *are like two young Roes*: For their agility, skipping up and down to ſuckle the converts; implying that the firſt Miniſtry of the Jewes, at the converſion of that people ſhall rather be as the Evangeliſts, bound to no certain place, than as Paſtors fixed to any ſetled Congregation, which yet outwardly they ſhall be.

That are twins.]

Firſt, for their likeneſſe in diſpoſition.

Secondly, brotherly equality.

Verſ. 4. *Thy neck is as a Tower of Ivory: thine eyes like the fiſh pooles in Heſhbon, by the gate of Bath-rabbim: thy noſe is as the tower of Lebanon, which looketh toward Damaſcus.*

Chap. 4. verſe 4. *Thy neck is as a tower of Ivory.*] The neck (as above) is the faith of the Church, joyning Chriſt & his Church together, as the neck doth the head and body.

As a tower, for ſtrength, *of Ivory*, for precioufneſſe, for which faith is commended. 1 Pet. 1. 7. 2 Pet. 1. 1.

Thine eyes are like the fiſh pooles in Heſhbon, by the gate of Bath-rabbim.] For the abundance of water, meaning teachers, that they ſhall yeeld even tears of Repentance at their converſion, partly for the great wrong they had done our Saviour, partly to conſider the unſpeakable and undeſerved kindneſſe of God towards them. Zech. 12. 10 Ier. 3. 8, 9. & 50. 4.

Thy noſe is like the tower of Lebanon, which looketh toward Damaſcus.] There was a double houſe of the forreſt of *Lebanon*, the one in *Ieruſalem*, built by *Solomon*, ſo called by way of reſemblance; In which hee put his golden ſhields, whence *Shiſhak* taking them, is ſaid to take them out of *Ieruſalem*: of this houſe ſpeaketh *Iſaiah*, *Iſa.* 22. 8. 1 King. 7. 2 & 10. 17. 1 King. 14. 25, 26.

There was another houſe built in the forreſt of *Lebanon* as appeareth by this place, which is ſaid to looke toward *Damaſcus*, to diſtinguiſh it from the other which is in *Ieruſalem*.

Lebanon it ſelfe ſtood in the utmoſt

Confines of *Iſrael* Northward towards *Syria*: and therefore this houſe built in *Lebanon* is ſaid to looke toward *Damaſcus* the chiefe City of *Syria*. Now *Lebanon* being full of all manner of ſweet and fragrant trees, and ſhrubs, and ſpices; the Tower built in *Lebanon* muſt needs be compaſſed with the ſweet ſmelling odours, to the great refreſhing and delight of ſuch as ſhould lodge in it.

Hence the noſe of this pure Church is compared to this Tower; becauſe they that dwell in this Church ſhall bee wonderfully refreſhed with the ſweet odours of the Miniſtry, which is the ſweet ſavour of life unto life: as alſo with the ſavoury conference of good Chriſtians, and their faithfull and godly converſation.

2 Cor. 2. 15.

Verſ. 5. *Thine head upon thee is like Carmel, and the haire of thine head like purple, the King is held in the galleries.*

Thine head upon thee is like Carmel. Carmel excelled for fruit, and fulneſſe in feeding Cattell, and therefore is reckoned with *Lebanon*, and *Sharon*, and

and *Bashan*, famous for fertility.

Isai. 33.9. & 35.2. 1 Sam.15. 17.

The head of the Church under Christ is the Civill Magistrate. The meaning then is, that the Magistrate of this Church shall yeeld store of sound and sweet nourishment to the people, by giving and maintaining free passage to each holy Ordinance of God, and also by wholsome Lawes, and lastly by good example of godly life.

The haire of thy head like purple.] The haire; whether it bee the common Christians of the Church that hang upon Christ, or the Officers or Servants that hang upon the Magistrates of that Church, they are like purple.

Isai.33.24 and 63.1.

First, not onely died in crimson blood of Christ.

Cant.7.1. Zech.12.8. Rev.16 12 Isai.60.17. and 18.

Secondly, but also of a royall hue, as purple is a princely die; all of them as Princes.

The Officers and Exacters shall bee Peace and Righteousnesse.

These Officers shall not basely sharke for bribes, nor exact for fees, nor oppresse for filthy lucre, nor pick holes in mens estates to trouble the

people and enrich themselves; but like purple-clothed Princes, be like their Ministers, and honour both their Ministers and themselves with Peace and Righteousnesse.

Cant. 1. 17

The King is held in the Rafters.] For so the word is turned before, where the Rafters were understood partly of the Temple. *Held*, is alwaies (to my remembrance) used for holding by constraint, bound as a Prisoner. The meaning may be then, That the King, or chiefe Magistrate is bound to bee present at the Ordinances of God in the Temple, as any other private Christian; which is foretold expressly of this Church, when the people goe into the Temple, the Prince is commanded to goe in with them, when they goe out, he shall goe out with them together; he shall come in with the first, and go out with the last: Or what if it imply that their greatest Magistrates shall submit themselves to bee bound with the censures of the Church, according to that where the Psalmist telleth of binding of Kings with

Ezek. 46. 10.

Psal. 149. 6. 8. & 9. v. Isai. 49. 22.

with the Ordinances of God in the Church. And *Isaiah* foretelleth that Kings and Queenes shall bow downe their faces towards the earth unto the Church, and licke the dust of their feet; both their interpretations stand well together.

First, this doth shew us how to come and appeare beautifull in the eyes of the Lord Jesus: which is when wee turne our feet from the estate and wayes, and bondage of sin and Satan, and come out of the captivity into the liberty of his children, when wee claime our Inheritance of the Kingdome of heaven, seeking after it above all earthly blessings, and walking towards it; when we walke confidently in a Christian course, then Christ admireth our beauty. How beautifull are thy goings with shooes, *O Princes daughter!* Yea, Christ then esteemeth us as Princes children: what matter then if fooliſh Men account us Peasants, and our going with shooes as straight in the instep? but wee stand not, nor fall not to their judgements, *Use 1.*

but to his who ſhall judge us to eternall happineſſe, or miſery at the laſt
Mat. 5. 18. day: He word muſt ſtand when eeaven
2 Tim. 2. 21 and earth ſhall fall: If he account us veſſels of honour, we are ſo indeed, who is it that diſhonoureth us? If men ſhould caſt a veſſell of gold or ſilver into the mire, and trample upon it, yet the veſſell is ſtill a veſſell of honour, good, and rich, and precious; the mire may eaſily be waſhed off from ſuch veſſels. Be not diſcouraged then from Chriſtian courſes by fooliſh feares of reproach: The truth is, if we goe on in ſin, Chriſt eſteemeth of us as baſe peaſants, as ugly and abominable in his ſight, naked, bare, deformed, and defiled; yea, he eſteemeth our goings as going barefoot, which either, firſt, brawneth our feet with a thicke skin, that thereby we grow inſenſible and feele nothing: or ſecondly, pricketh us with unneceſſary ſcruples and fears.

Uſe 2. Secondly, we may from hence obſerve to whom the praiſe of the converſion of the forwardeſt Chriſtians is due;

due; to wit, to the hands of a cunning workman, the God of power and peace. We might be alſo called as often to returne, as the *Shulamite* in the laſt verſe of the former Chapter: and yet unleſſe this cunning workman put the bones of our thighes into joynt, wee ſhall not returne to him.

Vſe 3. Further, ſee here the uſe of Baptiſme, even to Infants. The Anabaptiſts object that Infants can receive no benefit by it, becauſe they yet receive no underſtanding, no benefit by the word: As if Infants cannot receive nouriſhment by the Navell, though they can neither take, nor chew, nor ſucke meat with hand or mouth: Baptiſme is the Navell by which Infants are nouriſhed in the Church.

Baptiſmes uſe.

Vſe 4. Fourthly, from this Navell, never wanting liquor; obſerve, there doth never want juſt matter of inſtruction and comfort to be fetched from our baptiſme againſt all temptations. Doth Satan detaine thee from obeying thine effectuall

Comfort in Baptiſme.

effectuall calling: Remember in Baptiſme from thine Infancy thou waſt admitted into the family of Chriſt; doth hee trouble thee with feares and doubts, that thy ſinnes are not pardoned? behold thy baptiſme is full of liquor of Chriſts blood, to juſtifie thee from all thy ſinnes: Doth Satan tempt thee to defile thy ſelfe with any ſinne? Behold thou art waſhed ſolemnely in baptiſme from all ſinne, and wilt thou defile thy ſelfe againſt thy baptiſme?

Uſe 5. Fifthly, in the Lords Supper, ſee what plenty of excellent ſound and ſweet nouriſhment is offered to us, even an heap of wheat: *Chriſts fleſh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed.* There is al-ſufficient nouriſhment for an hungry ſoule; this ſerveth to quicken our appetite to this heavenly banquet.

Iohn 6.55.

Uſe 6. Sixthly, obſerve what manner of perſons ſhould bee admitted to the Lords Table, and how we ſhould prepare our ſelves thereto. This heape of wheat is not to bee ſet about with ſtinking weeds, but with faire lillies: Cleanſe

Cleanſe wee our ſelves then from all ſcandalous ſinnes, yea, and from all ſecret ſinnes, to our beſt endeavours, ſo ſhall we be fit to be ſet about this heap of wheat, the Lords Table.

Seventhly, note that Miniſters, to be like Roes, skipping up and downe to gather and ſuckle the children of the Church, is fitter for a Church in gathering, than convenient in a Church conſtituted; for then the breſts hang in their place like cluſters of Grapes upon the branches of the Vine, *v.*7,8 But they muſt be breſts giving ſuck, not dry nurſes; that is their duty in every eſtate of the Church. Or if their people bee growne up in Chriſt to fitneſſe for ſtrong meat, then They to be full in a ſtronger liquor than milke, as cluſters of grapes, full of wines. *Vſe* 7. Heb. 5.12.

Eightly, ſee the beauty and commendation of three cardinall graces: *Vſe* 8.

Firſt, Faith, to be

Firſt, ſtrong,

Secondly, precious, applying the precious promiſes, and making us rich with them.

Secondly,

Secondly, Repentance to abound in brokenneſſe of ſpirit through godly ſorrow, melting into abundance of teares, or other affections ſutable thereto.

Thirdly, obedience, to be

First, fragrant,

Secondly, and that with all manner of ſweet fruits and good, that all that converſe with us may ſmell a ſweet ſavour from our converſation.

Uſe 9. Ninthly, marke here a leſſon for Magiſtrates, to bee as *Carmell*, yeelding ſome ſweet and plentifull nouriſhment to the people.

First, by procuring free paſſage to Gods Ordinances, whence *Iehoſhaphats* Nobles are ſaid to teach.

2 Chr. 1. 7. 7. 9.

Secondly, by making wholeſome Lawes.

Thirdly, by giving good example of life, to have no Officers hanging about them of baſe demeanor, exactors, promotors, contentious perſons, but ſuch as may execute it themſelves and their Miniſters, and for publique Ordinances of Gods worſhip; it is no diſparage-

diſparagement to Magiſtrates to behave themſelves reverendly in them, and to ſubmit themſelves unto them as unto Chriſt. *Vſe* 10.

Tenthly, from this compleat deſcription of the beauty of the Church in all her parts, obſerve,

Firſt, that the Church was never ſo compleatly beautifull in all her parts, as it ſhallbe when the Jewes are called. The Apoſtolique Primitive Church, though all fair, yet wanted this headlike Carmel, a Chriſtian Magiſtrate, yea and ſome purity of the Sacrament. 1 Cor. 11. 20.

Secondly, in that he beginneth this deſcription from the feet, and ſo aſcendeth to the head in order: It may ſeeme the calling of the Jewes ſhall begin at firſt, rather with ſome of the loweſt people, and ſo aſcend higher and higher to more eminent perſons.

Thirdly, in that the Church neither here (where ſo many of her members are ſet forth) nor in all this Song is deſcribed, by the beauty of her hands, or fingers, wee muſt not gather that therefore this Church will bee barren of

of good works God forbid, but rather conceive, Chriſt concealeth the mention of her hands; to wit, her works, partly,

Firſt, becauſe the Harlot of Rome ſo delighteth ſo much to boaſt of her hands, of her works, which indeed ſhe wants: Chriſt had rather his Church ſhould abound in good works in ſilence, than boaſt of them, eſpecially when they are wanting.

Secondly, becauſe it is he alone (and not wee) *that worketh all our workes for us.*

Iſai. 26. 12. Hoſ. 14. 8. Ioh. 15. 5.

Cantic. 7. verſ. 6.——*verſ. 4. of 8. Chap. How faire, &c.*

In theſe verſes the holy Ghoſt goes on to deſcribe the ſecond eſtate of the Jewes Church, as is ſpoken above, *Chap. 7. ver. 1.* in *ver. 6, 7.* as growne up to her full ſtature and maturity.

For firſt, beauty is not obſerved till full growth; now here her beauty is admired, *ver. 6.*

Secondly, her ſtature is expreſſely mentioned to bee a Palme-tree. *v. 7.*

Thirdly, her breſts are here mentioned

ned againe, *ver.* 7. which ſheweth that he ſpeaketh not of the ſame eſtate of the ſame Church as afore: Beſides the breſts yeelding wine in ſtead of milke, it is a ſigne the Church ſhall then be growne to more maturity and fitneſſe to be fed with ſtronger meat.

The Church of the Jewes then come to her fuller growth is here deſcribed.

Firſt, by her beauty, which is admirable, *How faire!* and ioyned with pleaſure, *How pleaſant art thou!* eſpecially for publique worſhip ſo deſcribed, *verſe 6.*

Secondly, by her ſtature reſembled to a palme tree, *ver.* 7.

Thirdly, her breſts reſembled to cluſters of Grapes, *ver.* 7.

The third eſtate of this Church, as it ſhall be further enlarged by the acceſſe of the Gentiles, is deſcribed, *ver.* 8. 10. and that

Firſt, by Chriſts climbing this palm-tree, and taking hold of the boughes of it, *ver.* 8.

Secondly, by the rich ſupply of nouriſhment from her breſts, *ver.* 8.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, by the ſmell of her noſe, reſembled to Apples. *ver.* 8.

Fourthly, by the power of her Doctrine, *ver.* 9.

Fifthly, by her familiar fellowſhip with Chriſt, *ver.* 10.

The fourth eſtate of this Church, as it ſhall multiply, and ſtretch it ſelfe into the Country villages, is deſcribed, *ver.* 11. to the 4. of the next Chapter, and that

Firſt, by the occaſion of this encreaſe, the Churches invitement of Chriſt to viſit the Country villages, *ver.* 11.12.

Secondly, by the affectionate ſervice of this Church to Chriſt, cha. 8. *ver.* 1.2.

Thirdly, by Chriſts affectionate embracing of her, *ver.* 3.

Fourthly, by the Churches deſire for the continuance of this eſtate without interruption, *ver.* 4.

Ver. 6. *How faire, and how pleaſant art thou, O love for delights!*

How faire!] The faireneſſe and beauty of the Church implyeth ſutably to

to what is found in the naturall beauty of the body.

Firſt, a compleat integrity of all the Members of this Church; where any Member is wanting, there is deformity, beauty is blemiſhed. This Church ſhall want then no Ordinances of God, nor any ſuch Members to whom the diſpenſation of each Ordinance belongeth.

Secondly, a fit proportion of all the Members of the Church one to another; no ſwellings, no convulſions.

Thirdly, a good colour in the outward face of things, all carried decently, and in order: *How faire!* It implyeth admirable beauty in all theſe reſpects.

How pleaſant for delights!] This word implyeth a ready willingneſſe of this Church to the publique worſhip of God, which is here called delights; as being the marriage bed wherein Chriſt moſt familiarly ſolaceth himſelfe with his Church.

This ready willingneſſe of this Church was foretold, and the willing- Pſa. 110. 3.

neſſe of this people to any ſervice of
2 Cor. 9. 7. of his is pleaſant to him.

O love!] As if the Church were ſo lovely; that it were even love it ſelfe.

The five former verſes deſcribed the Church in her ſeverall Members a part. This verſe conſidereth the whole body met together in publique duties.

Verſ. 7. *This thy ſtature is like to a palme-tree, and thy breſts to cluſters of grapes.*

This thy ſtature is like a palme-tree.] This tree is eminent,

Firſt, for her ſtraightneſſe.

Secondly, for her tallneſſe.

Ier. 17. 8. Thirdly, for her perpetuall greenneſſe and fruitfulneſſe, as that

Fourthly, for her thriving under weight preſſing it downe.

Fifthly, for her eaſineſſe to be climbed, having many boughes, whereon to ſtay hands and feet: So ſhall the Church bee eminent for uprightneſſe thererein, for growing up even againſt all oppoſitions of *Gog* and *Magog*, for ready entertaining of all the faithfull that ſhall come to her.

Plin. lib. 13. cap. 4.

Thy

Thy breſts are like the cluſters of the vine-grapes.] Their Miniſters ſuch like in foure reſpects,

Firſt, not few, as afore, two young Roes, but many, as cluſters.

Secondly, not ſtirring up and down as Roes, from place to place, but hanging in their places.

Thirdly, full of ſtrong liquor of ſound Doctrine.

Fourthly, requiring ſome preſſure in urging (though little) before they empty themſelves, but upon eaſie preſſure doing it plentifully.

I ſaid, I will goe up to the Palme-tree, I will take hold of the boughes thereof: now alſo thy breſts ſhall be as cluſters of the vine, and the ſmell of thy noſe like apples. Verſe 8.

I ſaid, I will goe up to the Palme-tree, I will take hold of the boughes thereof.] Chriſt ſpeakes of himſelfe to imply the readineſs of his Members to reſort and flock to this Church of the Jewes; for what Chriſts Members doe by the guidance of his Spirit, he accounteth it his owne action. This forwardneſſe

of the Gentiles to ascend and resort to *Ierusalem*, is elsewhere foretold more plainly*.

* Zech. 8. 23. Isai. 60. 8. 11.

Now also thy brests as the clusters of the vine.] And that is notwithstanding the plenteous accesse of the Gentiles to the Church. Here shall be no defect of Ministers to teach and feed them all; but there shall be still a large supply of store, sweet and plentifull Teachers, as clusters of grapes to refresh them all.

And the smell of thy nose like apples.] Notwithstanding this plenteous accesse of the Gentiles, the life of common Christians intainted with Heathenish & Popish unsavory pollutions; yet the Church her selfe, and they that live in it shal smel a fragrant savour of the good conversation of the people.

The smell of thy nose.] Not which the nose yeeldeth, but which is yeelded to the nose, to thy savoury discerning shal be sweet and comfortable as that of Apples

Before, when this Church consisted of her owne people, her smell was as that of *Lebanon*, v. 4. & now by the accesse

ceſſe of the Gentiles it ſhal not be corrupt. Indeed when the Iſraelites came out of *Egypt*, the mingled of the Gentiles with them, drew them away to murmuring and luſting; for this compare *Exod.* 12.38. with *Numb.* 11.4. But no ſuch contagion ſhall accrue to this Church by the mingling of the Gentiles with them.

And the roofe of thy mouth like the beſt wines, for my beloved, that goeth downe ſweetly, cauſing the lips of thoſe that are aſleep to ſpeak. *Verſe 9.*

And the roofe of thy mouth like the beſt wines. Hebr. *Like good wine, going to my beloved moſt ſtraightly and rightly.*] That is, the Doctrine of the Church ſhall bee as ever any moſt ſweet and powerfull, and comfortable, and generous wine; it ſhall ever goe, or tend directly to Chriſt, alwaies aiming at the preaching of him.

To goe rightly, or ſtraightly, implyeth the ſtrength and generouſneſſe of wine, when it ſparkleth upward in the cup, as *Prov.* 23.31. which here expreſſeth the lively vigour of the

Churches Doctrine, in her preaching of Chriſt, *cauſing the lips of thoſe that are aſleepe to ſpeak.* Such ſhall be the ſweet and powerfull efficacy of the Doctrine of the Church then, as ſhall cauſe the ſleepy and drowſie profeſſors, whether amongſt us Gentiles, or amongſt the Jewes, to open their mouthes and ſpeake plentifully to Gods praiſe. When the Apoſtles ſpake (the wonderfull workes of God) in ſtrange tongues, ſome of the people thought them to be full of new wine, but they were deceived, and were willing ſo to account of them in mockery. But theſe people ſhall be full of new wine of the Spirit and Word of God, to open their mouthes to ſpeak as the Apoſtles did, the wonderfull workes of God.

Acts 2. 11, 13.

Verſ. 10. *I am my beloveds, and his deſire is towards me.*

This profeſſion of the Church, that ſhe is her beloveds, Argueth,

Firſt, her familiar fellowſhip with Chriſt.

Secondly,

Secondly, her faith, or confidence of her Interest in him, or his in her.

Thirdly, her open profession of the same.

That his desire is towards her, argueth the strength of his affection towards her, and it is the same word used *, which there implieth two things, Gen. 3.16. & 4.7.

First, the strength of their affection to their husband, and their elder brother.

Secondly, the subordination and dependance thereof upon their will: the former is here also meant, the latter doth not stand with the soveraignty and headship of Christ over his Church: Unlesse thus far, to intimate Christs tender regard of the will and desire of his Church; as he would be as unwilling to deny them, as loving husbands be to deny their wives any thing. Ephes. 5. 23, 24.

Come my beloved, let us goe forth into the field: let us lodge in the villages. *Vers.* 11.

In these words, the Church in-

inviteth Christ to visite the Countrey villages about her, implying,

First, her prayers to Christ, that with her he might lodge there, plant and set Churches there.

Secondly, her care to take and observe all opportunities to advance such a work.

Vers. 12. *Let us get up early to the vineyards, let us see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grape appeare, and the pomegranats bud forth, there will I give thee my loves.*

Let us get up early to the vineyards, let us see if the vine flourish.] Meaning if any opportunity should offer it selfe, to plant Religion amongst them; then Christ and she might be forward to further the same.

Thirdly, her promise to Christ to employ her best endeavours to such a service.

There will I give thee my loves.] The love of the Church to Christ is especially seen in feeding his Lambes and Sheep: She therefore offereth to Christ free use of her deerest and best affections to set forward such a work.

Ioh. 21. 15.

Fourth-

Fourthly, her discerning of some good beginning of such a work.

The Mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved. Vers. 13.

The Mandrakes give a smell.] Which is a Countrey field hearb, yet amiable, which argueth some fruits to be gathered in the Countrey. Gen. 30. 14.

And at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old.] And therefore, out of the abundance of her own store, she can supply the Countrey with all fit helps, to her further gathering and establishment.

Which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved.] She professeth her desire to employ all her store to Christs advantage, and therefore abounding with Ministers, and other fit Officers for gathering and establishing the Countrey Churches about her; she expresseth her readinesse to bring them out to his service and use, as if they were some good houshold provision, laid up by her for such a use. The accesse

ceſſe of the whole Land of Iſrael to the City is profitable. The Land ſhall be called *Belulah*, as well as the City *Hephzibah*. ver. 10. A Cauſey is caſt up for a mutuall recourſe of Countrey to City.

Iſai. 62. 4.

THE

THE CANTICLES, OR SONG OF SONGS, opened and explained.

THE TEXT.

CHAP. 8.

O *That thou wert as my brother that ſucked the breſts of my mother! when I ſhold finde thee out, I would kiſſe thee, yet I ſhould not be deſpiſed.*

2 *I would lead thee, and bring thee into my mothers houſe, who would inſtruct me: I would cauſe thee to drinke of ſpiced wine, of the juyce of my pomegranat.*

3 *His left hand ſhould be under my head, and his right hand ſhould embrace me.*

4 *I charge you, O daughters of Jeruſalem, that ye ſtir not up, nor awake my love untill hee pleaſe.*

5 (*Who*

5 (*Who is this that commeth up from the Wildernesse, leaning upon her beloved?*) *I raised thee up under the apple tree: there thy mother brought thee forth, there she brought thee forth that bare thee.*

6 *Set me as a seale upon thy heart, as a seale upon thine arme: for love is as strong as death, iealousie is cruell as the grave: the coales thereof are coales of fire, which hath a most vehement flame.*

7 (*Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned.*

8 *We have a little sister, and shee hath no breasts, what shall we doe for our sister, in the day when she shall be spoken for?*

9 *If she be a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver: and if she be a doore, we will inclose her with boards of Cedar.*

10 *I am a wall, and my breasts like towers: then was I in his eyes as one that found favour.*

11 *Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon, he let out the vineyard unto Keepers: every one for the fruit thereof, was to bring a thousand pieces of silver.*

12 *My vineyard which is mine, is before me: thou (O Solomon) must have a thousand, and those that keep the fruit thereof, two hundred.*

13 *Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken to thy voice, cause me to heare it.*

14 *Make*

14 *Make haste my beloved, and be thou like to a Roe, or to a young Hart upon the mountaine of spices.*

THE Church of the Jewes, both in City and Country thus gathered, doe here expresse her ardent affection to Christ, and due respect of him, which the old Synagogue shewed towards her whilst he was conversant amongst them in the flesh. (Since saith she) *O that thou wert as my brother, &c.* Christ was made our Brother by taking our Nature upon him at his Incarnation, and then hee sucked the breasts of the Church, attending to the Ministry of *Iohn*, and other Jewish Teachers: she therefore to shew her affection, desireth that he were now amongst them conversant in their streets againe in bodily presence, shee would not doe then as the old Synagogue did, be ashamed of him, or come to him by night; but she would kisse him, and embrace him in the open streets, and yet no man should then despise her for her so doing, as they did; but every one should encourage her

Ioh 4. 48, 49.

her in her obsequiousnesse to him: She would not reject him, and thrust him out of the Synagogue, as her old Ancestors had done; but if she found him without, she would lead him, and invite him into their Synagogue, or Temple, there to instruct her, and teach her the will of her father; shee would not give him gall to eat, and Vinegar to drink, as her forefathers had done; but she would cause him to drink of the best delicate spiced wine, and the juice of her Pomegranat.

Luke 4. 28, 29.

Mat. 27. 34

Verse 3. *His left hand should bee under my head, and his right hand should embrace mee.*]

The left hand of Christ is the Christian Magistrate, which shall in those daies support and advance the Church, and hold up her head.

His right hand is the faithfull Ministers, which shall speake comfortable things to her heart, and so embrace her, *Isa.* 62. for this also see,* *I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that you stir not up, nor awake my love untill he please.*

Ezek. 34. 23, 24, 25. Dan. 7. 27.

* Cant. 2. 6.

The

The Church enjoying these great mercies and blessings from Christ, chargeth all her daughters, members, to walk so thankfully, and fruitfully towards God, and lovingly and helpfully one towards another, and so circumspectly, and inoffensively to them which are without, that no occasion be given of their alteration of their happy estate. When the Church gave this charge before, it was in regard of the Roes and Hindes of the field; fearefull Christians comming on towards Religion, willing to flocke, and feed, and converse with the sheepe, yet ready to start and flee away upon any feare of danger of persecution; but now no regard is had of these fearfull ones; for they that shall then remaine fearefull, when the Church shall enjoy so great light and safety, they shall bee quite excluded from conversing with the Church.

Chap. 2. verse 7. Chap. 3. verse 5.

Isai. 65. 25.

For use, we may here learne

First, since the Church of the Jewes shall attaine to so great beauty, it ought to kindle our desire to pray earnestly

Use 1.

earnestly for their conversion, that wee may behold the admirable fairnesse thereof, and bee delighted with her consolations.

Isai. 66. 11. 12.

Use 2. Secondly, this doth teach us how to approve our selves pleasant and faire in Christs eyes, even by keeping his Ordinances in integrity, and simplicity, and by a willing readinesse to frequent the same.

Mat. 4. 8 9. Luk. 4. 5. 6

Christ may see all the world, as hee did when Sathan* shewed it to him, and yet not admire it, yea, condemne it for vanity, as it is*; but a well ordered Church, and ready, he admireth.

* Eccles. 1. 2. 14. & 2. 11. 15. 17. 19. 22. 24.

Use 3. Thirdly, here learn the more straight and sincere, the more patient and meek, the more faithfull, the more fruitfull in all holy obedience, &c. the more doe wee attaine to a Palme tree, like full stature of Christianity.

Use 4. Fourthly, it may learne and direct Ministers to apply themselves to the estate of their people: If they bee babes in Christ, to be as breasts of Milke to suckle them: If they be grown to ripe yeares, to bee as clusters of grapes

grapes to refresh them with stronger liquor, be ready to poure out sweet and comfortable liquor; but see some good calling to pressing you to it, let all your Doctrine direct to Christ, and dispense it with such powerfull efficacy of the Spirit, that the drowsie sluggard may bee raised up to some fruitfulnesse, and more holy walking towards God.

Fifthly, this may teach townes well provided for, to lend their best care and help for the edifying and calling home of Countrey Villages: Grudge not then at their ready resort to the gate of your Assemblies, but rather encourage them, that they may be partakers with them. *Use 5.*

Sixthly, this lets us see, that time shall come when forward profession shall be no disgrace; yea, men shall kisse Christ openly, and shall not bee despised. *Use 6.*

Seventhly, the malignity of our Ancestors against Christ and his Gospel must provoke us to more embra- *Use 7.*

cing of him, and more subjection to him.

Use 8. Eighthly, we may here see that a faithfull Ministry, and godly Magistracy is a pledge of Christs tender love, and kinde embracing of the Church.

Use 9. Ninthly, we are hence to take notice, that when a Church enjoyeth many gracious and sweet blessings from Christ, it is good for her to see it and acknowledge it; and to be careful that all her Members may so walk, as their happinesse be not interrupted. In the fourth verse the charge runneth thus, *That ye stir not up, &c.* But in the Hebr. *why should you stir up, &c.* As who should say, when all things are throughly and fully reformed and setled: Why should you goe about any Innovation? This manner of charge was never uttered before, *Cant. 2. ver. 7.* to the end.

(Who is this that commeth up from the wildernesse, leaning upon her beloved?) I raised thee up under the apple-tree: there thy mother brought thee forth, there shee brought thee forth that bare thee.

who

Who is this that commeth up from the wilderneſſe.] In theſe words the holy Ghoſt ſetteth out the calling and eſtate of two other Churches after the calling of the Jewes:

Firſt, the one ariſing out of the Wilderneſſe, *ver.* 5. 7.

Secondly, the other a little ſifter, *ver.* 8. 10. together with the eſtate of the whole Church, as it ſhall then ſtand, from that time to the end of the world, *ver.* 11. 14.

This Church comming up from the Wilderneſſe is deſcribed,

Firſt, by the unexpectedneſſe of her ariſing, together with the admiration of the Jewiſh Churches there, *ver.* 5. *Who is this that commeth up out of the wilderneſſe?*

Secondly, by the place of her ariſing, the Wilderneſſe.

Thirdly, by her familliar fellowſhip with Chriſt, joyned with her confidence on him, *leaning upon her beloved.*

Fourthly, by the means of the gathering and raiſing of this Church, *I raiſed thee up under an apple-tree, &c.* ver. 5.

Fifthly, by her earnest desire of his deepe affection to her, and continuall remembrance of her, *Set me as a seale upon thine heart, as a seale upon thine arme*, ver. 6. which petition of hers is urged by a motive, taken from the strength and depth of her affection to him, which she proveth,

First, by comparing her affection as equall to three things most strong,

First, Death.

Secondly, to the Grave.

Thirdly, to vehement flames of fire, *ver. 6.*

Secondly, by comparing it to two things as lesse than her affection, though they be also of great force,

First, to many waters, which cannot quench her affection of love.

Secondly, to the whole substance of any mans house, which would bee contemned if it were offered to withdraw her from Christ, *ver. 7.*

The calling and estate of the other Church, the little sister, is described by three passages,

First, by the consultation of the elder

elder Siſters; to wit, of the Jewiſh Churches, and of that Church coming up out of the Wilderneſſe, what they ſhall doe for her when ſhe ſhall be ſpoken of, *ver.* 8.

Secondly, by a reſolution what they ſhall doe for her, ſutable to what her condition (as they ſhall finde her) ſhall require, *ver.* 9.

Thirdly, a ſatisfaction given by this little Siſter, to the elder, how her eſtate ſtandeth, together with the cauſe thereof, Gods favour, that they may the better know what courſes to take for her, *ver.* 10.

The eſtate of the whole Church, as it ſhall ſtand after the converſion of the Jewes, and of thoſe other Churches is ſet forth;

Firſt, from Chriſts care for them, expreſſed,

Firſt, in his watchfulneſſe over them in his owne perſon, which he amplifies by the leſſe care which *Solomon* had of his vineyard, committing the keeping of it to others, *ver.* 11, 12.

Secondly, in his charge to the

Church, that he may heare her companions hearkening unto her, *ver.* 13.

Secondly, by the Churches prayer unto Christ, that he may haſten the tranſlating of them into heaven in the end of the world, *ver.* 14.

Who is this that commeth, &c.] Who theſe Churches ſhould be that remaine to be called after the converſion of the Jewes and Gentiles, we cannot conceive any more fitly than the Churches of *Aſſyria*; ſecondly, of *Egypt*, of which we read *Iſa.* 19. 23. 25. When a Church ſhall bee elected among the Jewes, ſignified by *Ezekiels* goodly Temple, the water of Gods Spirit ſhall flow from thence Eaſtward, goe downe into the Deſert, and from thence ſpread themſelves farre and neere.

Ezek. 47. 1. 9.

This Deſert, or Wilderneſſe Eaſtward from *Iudah*, is the Wilderneſſe of *Arabia*, whither Spirituall graces ſhall be conveyed by ſome comming from *Ieruſalem*, and from thence they ſhall bee further carried into the Eaſt Countries, to the gathering, and converſion

verſion of the *Aſſyrians* and others: Whence it is, that Church ariſing from the Wilderneſſe of *Arabia*, is ſaid to leane upon her beloved in an *Arabian* word; as when the holy Ghoſt was to ſpeak of the *Babylonian* Captivity (or Winter) being paſt, he uſeth the *Babylonian* or *Caldean* word. So then, when the Churches of *Iudea* ſhall ſee ſuch a goodly Church ſpring from ſmall helpe, out of the Wilderneſſe of *Arabia*, beyond their expectation, they ſhall ſay of her, *Who is this that commeth out of the Wilderneſſe, leaning upon her beloved?* truſting by faith on him, and thereby attaining and enjoying fellowſhip with him: for to leane is put as an act of faith or truſting *, and the geſture implieth familiar love *. Cant. 2. 11.

I raiſed thee under an apple tree.] Chriſt, or the Church of the Iewes by his power raiſed up his Church by the meanes of ſome inferior Magiſtrate, reſembled here by an Apple tree, as before *: For though hee was not ſo high and mighty as the Cedars Cant. 2. 3.

* Prov. 3. 5. * Iohn 13. 23. & 21. 20.

of *Lebanon*, or the Okes of *Bashan*; yet eminent he was, and his shadow good, and his fruit cordiall and comfortable.

And the meanes of the gathering of this Church, being at first but an inferiour Magistrate; the Church had more need and use of faith to leane upon her beloved, when soveraigne authority did not countenance the worke.

There thy mother brought thee forth.] To wit, the Mother-Church of the Jewes, or the Catholique, which is the Mother of us all.

Gal. 4. 26.

Vers. 6. *Set me as a seale upon thy heart, as a seale upon thine arme, for love is strong as death, jealousie is cruell as the grave: the coales thereof are coales of fire which hath a most vehement flame.*

Set me as a seale upon thine heart, as a seale upon thine arme.] That is, let me be deep engraven as a seale is into thine heart, or affection, and as a seale on thine arme, let me be continually in thy sight and remembrance. And because the heart is the seat of the will,

will, and the arme of strength, therefore she desireth his deep affection and mighty strength and power alwaies to be present with her for her comfort and peace.

For love is strong as death.] Death sheweth his strength,

First, in subduing all sorts of people high and low, young and old.

Secondly, accepting no compassion, nor yeelding to any opposition, but going through with his worke; such strength of love shal this Church shew to Christ, subduing all before her to the obedience of Christ, and not suffering any impediment to detaine her from him.

Iealousie is cruell as the grave.] Iealousie is a mixt affection of zeale or fervent love, and carries at any corrivalls, a rage with wrath against them: So fervent then shall the zealous love of this Church be to Christ, that she may not endure any such things as shall steale away the peoples hearts from Christ, or alienate or lessen his affection to her, but as the grave,

First,

First, shee shall devoure all such things, and bury them out of sight, And Secondly, there hold them under for ever.

The coales thereof are coales of fire, which have a most vehement flame.] The ardency of this love shall as coales of fire,

First, enflame her in all her services to Christ:

Secondly, burne up as stubble all impediments.

First, All inward green lusts.

Secondly, outward entanglements.

(*Vehement flame.*) Hebr. Flames of God, that is, excellent or extraordinary; for in Scripture Phrase, the things of God are transcendently excellent, as the Harpes of God *, the Trees of God *.

* Rev. 15. 2.
* Psal. 1. 3.

Flames of God, divine and vehement; and indeed this vehement love being kindled by Gods heavenly Spirit, cannot be quenched with earthly things.

Verse 7. *Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drowne it: if a man would*

would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned.

That is, neither adversities, though never so many, or deep, or strong, as many waters and floods, shall withdraw this love from Christ; nor all the treasures, and pleasures, and credit, which the substance of any mans house might procure us, shall be of any reckoning in comparison of Christ, to withhold our hearts from him.

We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts, what shall we doe for our sister, in the day when she shall be spoken for. Vers. 8

Wee have a little sister, &c.] The Church of *Iudea* and *Assyria* hearing of some good people growing up, and comming on in *Egypt*, they are solicitous what course to take for them for their growth and establishment.

(*A little sister.*) In comparison of the Jewes or Assyrians, for but *five Cities in the Land of Egypt speak the language of Canaan, and one of them shall be called the City of destruction.* Isa. 19. 18.

And she hath no breasts.] No Ministers

sters to give to them the sincere milk
1 Pet. 2. 2. of the word or the meanes of consolation in their oppressions and
Isa. 9. 10. distresses.

In the day when she shal be spoken for.] When the fulnesse of time shall come, that she shall grow up to such a multitude of Professors, as may bee fit to have a setled Church established amongst them; for there is a company grown up to be a fit Spouse for Christ. When there are so many good Christians as may constitute a well ordered Church.

Verse 9. *If she be a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver: and if she be a doore, we will enclose her with boards of Cedar.*

If she be a wall, we will build.] That is, if she have a Christian Magistracy; for the Magistrate is a wall.

First, high, to keep out invasions of enemies; even so doth he keepe out forraigne evills from breaking in upon his people.

Secondly, close to keepe in his people within bounds from breaking out into disorder.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, firme, whereon to reare (if occasion be) *a silver Palace*, whereon to lay the frame of a good motion, or course to bee taken for Publique good.

Fourthly, a Wall of partition, to divide betweene right and wrong, to give every man his own.

We will build upon her a silver palace.] We will make her garment honourable and wealthy.

If she be a doore.] That is, if she have faithfull Ministers, which as a doore, open the way to Christ, that the people may go in and out, and find pasture in him: *we will enclose her with boards of Cedar.*] Cedar is a Timber that will neither rot, nor breed wormes, and so will endure alwaies; Whence it was that the Heathen made their *Simulachra Deorum*, Images of their gods of this wood, to make them seeme eternall. These Sister-Churches then promise, that if their little sister of *Egypt* have any faithfull Ministers, they will provide for their safety and peace, that they bee not discouraged, nor

Plin. lib. 13. cap. 5.

nor disturbed in their function.

Vers. 10. *I am a wall, and my breasts like towers: then was I in his eyes as one that found favour.*

The little sister of *Egypt* resolveth her sisters, that shee wants neither Christian Magistrates, nor faithfull Ministers, so full of wholesome Doctrine, as that her breasts swell like Towers; which yet she acknowledgeeth to be a singular mercy and favour of Christ, and ascribeth all her store to his praise: *Then was I as one that found favour in his eyes.*

Verse 11. *Solomon had a vineyard in Baal-hamon:* A place so fruitfull that for excellency it was called the Lord of a multitude, or the owner of great encrease. He let out the vineyard unto keepers, who paid him a great rent, even thousands for the fruit of it, and yet had a good portion, certain hundreds for their owne paines.

Vers 12. *My vineyard which is mine, is before me; thou (O Solomon) must have a thousand, and those that keep the fruit thereof, two hundred.*

To

To wit, I let not out my vineyard to others, but I kept it my selfe alwaies; let *Solomon* take his thousands for his fruits of his vineyard, and the Reapers their hundreds; I will not so doe, but take all the paines to keep my vineyard, and reap all the gaines of the fruits thereof to my selfe. The meaning is, when Christ hath gathered all these Churches of the Jewes, Assyrians, Egyptians, and neighbour-Nations, hee will then keepe his Church with his mighty power, that neither Dragons, nor wilde Bores, nor Foxes shall hereafter root it up, or make havock of it, as in time past they have done: This is expresly foretold, and shall come to passe after the destruction of *Leviathan* the great Turke *. *Isa. 27. 1.

Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken to thy voyce, cause me to heare it. *Verse 13.

Thou that dwellest in the gardens. The Participle being of the Feminine Gender, sheweth that it is the Church, not Christ that is here spoken to, who

who is said to *dwell in the garden*; to wit, in the particular Churches, as the sea dwelleth in each particular Countrey sea; the German sea, the Spanish sea, the Balticke sea, &c. So the Catholique Church is divided into particular Churches, or the Jewish Mother Church dwelleth by her authority and directions in all other Churches.

The companions hearkning to thy word (or voice) *cause me to heare it.*] So the words in the originall which implyeth either that Church would have the Mother Church of the Jewes take care of all other Christian Churches, and give directions unto them, and yet not as unto her handmaids, but as to her companions; or else if the words be read according to the translation, *The companions hearken to thy voice, cause me to heare it*: They imply, that after the calling of these Churches, this shall bee their constant estate to the worlds end, they shall all

First, embrace one another as companions, not claiming Romish Supremacy.

Secondly,

Secondly, hearken to the voice and directions of the Mother Church, (in *Solomons* daies for wisdome to him.)

Thirdly, continue in calling upon the Name of Christ without dissipation and interruption to the end.

Make haste my beloved, and be thou like to a Roe, or to a young Hart upon the mountaine of spices. Vers 14.

This is the prayer of all the Churches; Now that all things are accomplished, the which Prophets and Apostles have foretold, that Christ would hasten his last comming as swiftly and quickly, as the swiftest of the creatures, *the Roe, or young Hart*, to take them up with himselfe into the highest Heavens of the Mountaines of spices, where are all manner of spices, where are all manner of sweet and fragrant and pleasant things, even fulnesse of joy at Gods right hand for evermore. Thus is the end of the Revelations, *The Spirit and the Bride*, and every faithfull soule saith in like sense, *come Lord Iesus, come quickly*; Psal. 16. 11. Rev. 22. 17. 20.

The use of this is, first, to teach us *Use* 1.

that the Nations of the Gentiles shall not be cast off from the fellowship of the Church, when the Jewes are called, as the Jewes were out of the Church, that the Gentiles might bee grafted in * ; but even after their calling, new Churches of the Gentiles shall bee brought in ; yea, their conversion shall bring from the dead into the world : *what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?* yea, *the Gentiles shall bring their glory to it*, yea, the cursed Canaanite shall not be excluded from partaking in this blessing *. How much more may we hope then that these Churches of Christendome, which have suffered so much with Christ, and for him, under the Dragon, and the Beast, and the Turk, shall partake with the glory of these Churches of the Jewes when the time shall come.

* Rom. 11. 19, 20.

Rom: 11. ver. 12, 15.

Revel. 21. ver. 24.

* Ezek. 16. 55. 60. 61.

Use 2. Secondly, this doth teach us how to attaine fellowship and holy familiarity with Christ, even by faith, leaning upon him as our beloved ; infidelity and doubting hinder our sweet

communion

communion with Christ, labour wee therefore to abandon it from us.

Thirdly, we may here see the duty of inferiour Magistrates what it is, even to see that the Church be raised up under them, how much more to countenance and protect it with their shadow, and to comfort it with the fruit of their sweet and wholesome lawes and examples. *Use 3.*

Fourthly, this may serve for tryall of the goodnesse of our affections to Christ; if we thirst after his deepe affection to us, and continuall remembrance of us, if wee labour to subdue our selves and all ours to him, if wee jealously warre against all that which might impaire our love to him, if wee burne up all our impediments, if no afflictions can discourage us from him, if no prosperity can shake our intire desires after him, we are then wel affected to him as this Church is: If we desire to have such deep place in Christs heart, it is a plain signe Christ hath a deep place in our hearts. *Use 4.*

Use 5. Fifthly, this may shew us a meanes how to consume all base and kitchin-loves and lusts in us, set upon these sensuall worldly things; grow up in this spirituall love to Christ, and it will swallow up and consume these lesser fires; the greater light will extinguish the lesser, as the Sun will put out the kitchin fire; so this strong fire of Christs love in us will burne up, and eat out all lust in us.

Use 6. Sixthly, this may comfort the true Church and children of God, in assurance of their perseverance: if our love to him be so unchangeable, that many waters of afflictions cannot quench it, nor floods of temptations drowne it; if it be so strong as death, that it will devour all before it, how much more is his love to us!

Use 7. Seventhly, this lets us see that the Churches that are well established themselves, must not contemne their weake neighbour Churches, but take care, and use all good meanes for their establishment and growth: How far should greater Churches bee from cutting

cutting off the breasts, or breaking downe the walls of their small neighbour-Churches.

Eightly, this may teach Magistrates to be as walls to keep out all disorder, stand up as a wall if there come in disorders, stand so high that they cannot come over; if any would goe a begging, keep them in; restraine beggery, idleneſſe, drunkenneſſe, whordome, and prophaneneſſe, all evill courses; be as a wall, whereon to reare a silver Palace for ever; whereon to lay the frame of a good motion, course, or order, to be taken for the publique good; any good motion made, or to be made, is as a wall to divide equally to all men their right. *Use 8.*

Ninthly, this may teach Ministers to be as doores to open a wide entrance for the people to come to Christ; not as those Scribes and Pharisees, which Christ complaines of *, which neither enter in themselves, nor would suffer others: such are rather Port-cullises, yea, gates of Hell. *Use 9.*

* Luke 11. 52.

Use 10. Tenthly, this may let us see the duty of Magistrates; if Ministers bee doores, it should bee their care to hem them in with boards of Cedar, to provide for their security: it is the duty of every Magistrate and member to hem them in, that no enemy may be able to oppose them, but that they may be without fear among them, as it is *, *See that Timothy be without feare among you.*

+1 Cor. 16. 10.

Use 11. Eleventhly, this may let us see a Church enjoying a faithfull Ministry, and a Christian Migistracy, enjoyeth a speciall favour from Christ.

Use 12. Twelfthly, this lets us see what great care Christ will one day have of his Church, though Lyons, Dragons, and Beares have broken in upon the Church to devour it; and besides many Foxes have sought to subvert it, and to cut the sinewes of it asunder, yet when Christ shall take the government of it into his hands, there shall be no enemy to offer violence to it: When the great *Leviathan* shall be punished, even *Leviathan* that

that crooked Serpent, and the Dragon that is in the sea shall be slaine; *In that day sing yee unto her, a vineyard of new wine*; yea, the Lord will keepe it, he will water it every moment, lest any hurt it, he will keep it night and day; yea, Christ will one day free his Church from all oppression, and give free passage to all his ordinances. Isa.27.2.1.

Use 13. Finally, this serves to teach us all what affection we should have to the comming of Christ to Judgement, to desire him to be as the *Roe or a young Hart upon the mountaines of spices*; to take us up into the highest heavens, where are all manner of sweet and fragant and pleasant things, *even fulnesse of joy for evermore.*

Psa.16.11. 2 Tim.4.8. The faithfull Spouses of Christ do earnestly desire his comming to judgement, but Harlots would put off his comming: A chaste wife, and a loyall Spouse desires her husband to send no more letters, but to hasten his returne, and come home; but a harlot would have her husbands comming deferred; so they whose hearts are a whoring

whoring after the world, neither desire Christs comming, nor love his appearing. That we may therefore shew and approve our selves to bee the true Spouses of Christ, desire his hasty comming, and say, as *Revel.* 22. 20. *Even so come Lord Iesus, come quickly, Amen. The Lord work this good work and frame of grace in our hearts, for Iesus Christs sake, Amen.*

Alas who shal live when God doth this?

Num. 24. 23.

FINIS.